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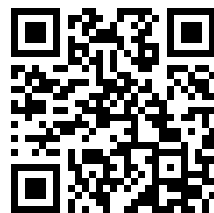
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MY LORD DUKE.*

By E. W. HORNUNG,

AUTHOR OF 'THE ROGUE'S MARCH,' &c.

CHAPTER I.—THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY.

THE Home Secretary leant his golf-clubs against a chair. He looked the injured man of the two.

'I am only sorry it should have come now,' said Claude apologetically.

'Just as we were starting for the links! Our first day, too!' muttered the Home Secretary.

'I think of Claude,' remarked his wife. 'I can never tell you, Claude, how much I feel for you! We shall miss you dreadfully, of course; but we couldn't expect to enjoy ourselves after this; and I think, in the circumstances, that you are quite right to go up to town at once.'

'Why?' cried the Home Secretary warmly. 'What good can he do in the Easter holidays? Everybody will be away: he'd much better come with me and fill his lungs with fresh air.'

'I can never tell you how much I feel for you,' repeated Lady Caroline to Claude Lafont.

'Nor I!' exclaimed Olivia. 'It's too horrible! I don't believe it. To think of them finding him after all! I don't believe they *have* found him. You've made some mistake, Claude. You've forgotten your code; the cable really means that they've *not* found him, and are giving up the search!'

Claude Lafont shook his head.

'There may be something in what Olivia says,' remarked the Home Secretary. 'The mistake may have been made at the other end. It would bear talking over on the links.'

Claude shook his head again.

'We have no reason to suppose there has been a mistake at all, Mr Sellwood. Cripps is not the kind of man to make mistakes; and I can swear to my code. The word means, "Duke found—I sail with him at once."'

'An Australian Duke!' exclaimed Olivia.

'A blackamoor, no doubt,' said Lady Caroline, with conviction.

'Your kinsman, in any case,' said Claude Lafont, laughing; 'and my cousin; and the head of the family from this day forth.'

'It was madness!' cried Lady Caroline softly. 'Simple madness—but then all you poets *are* mad! Excuse me, Claude, but you remind me of the Lafont blood in my own veins—you make it boil. I feel as if I never could forgive you! To turn up your nose at one of the oldest titles in the three kingdoms; to think twice about a purely hypothetical heir at the antipodes; and actually to send out your solicitor to hunt him up! If that was not Quixotic lunacy I should like to know what is?'

The Right Honourable George Sellwood took a new golf-ball from his pocket, and bowed his white head mournfully as he stripped off the tissue paper.

'My dear Lady Caroline, *noblesse oblige*—and a man must do his obvious duty,' he heard Claude saying, in his slightly pedantic fashion. 'Besides, I should have cut a very sorry figure had I jumped at the throne, as it were, and sat there until I was turned out. One knew there *had* been an heir in Australia; the only thing was to find out if he was still alive; and Cripps has done so. I'm bound to say I had given him up. Cripps has written quite hopelessly of late. He must have found the scent and followed it up during the last six weeks; but in another six he will be here to tell us all about it—and we shall see the Duke. Meanwhile, pray don't waste your sympathies upon *me*. To be perfectly frank, this

is in many ways a relief to me—I am only sorry it has come now. You know my tastes; but I have hitherto found it expedient to make a little secret of my opinions. Now, however, there can be no harm in my saying that they are not entirely in harmony with the hereditary principle. You hold up your hands, dear Lady Caroline, but I assure you that my seat in the Upper Chamber would have been a seat of conscientious thorns. In fact I have been in a difficulty, ever since my grandfather's death, which I am very thankful to have removed. On the other hand, I love my—may I say my art? And luckily I have enough to cultivate the muse on, at all events, the very best oatmeal; so I am not to be pitied. A good quatrain, Olivia, is more to me than coronets; and the society of my literary friends is dearer to my heart than that of all the Peers in Christendom.

Claude was a poet; when he forgot this fact he was also an excellent fellow. His affectations ended with his talk. In appearance he was distinctly desirable. He had long, clean limbs, a handsome, shaven, mild-eyed face, and dark hair as short as another's. He would have made an admirable Duke.

Mr Sellwood looked up, a little sharply, from his dazzling new golf-ball.

'Why go to town at all?' said he.

'Well, the truth is, I have been in a false position all these months,' replied Claude, forgetting his poetry and becoming natural at once. 'I want to get out of it without a day's unnecessary delay. This thing must be made public.'

The statesman considered.

'I suppose it must,' said he judiciously.

'Undoubtedly,' said Lady Caroline, looking from Olivia to Claude. 'The sooner the better.'

'Not at all,' said the Home Secretary. 'It has kept nearly a year. Surely it can keep another week? Look here, my good fellow. I came down here expressly to play golf with you. I took this house for the week for no other purpose in the world. And I don't mean to let you desert me, so that's all about it!'

'You're a perfect tyrant!' cried Lady Caroline. 'I'm ashamed of you, George; and I hope Claude will do exactly as he likes. I shall be sorry enough to lose him, goodness knows!'

'So shall I,' said Olivia simply.

Lady Caroline shuddered.

'Look at the day!' cried Mr Sellwood, jumping up with his pink face glowing beneath his virile silver hair. 'Look at the sea! Look at the sand! Look at the sea-breeze lifting the very carpet under our feet! Was there ever such a day for golf?'

Claude wavered visibly.

'Come on,' said Mr Sellwood, catching up his clubs. 'I'm awfully sorry for you, my boy. But come on!'

'You will have to give in, Claude,' said Olivia, who loved her father.

Lady Caroline shrugged her shoulders.

'Of course,' said she, 'I hope he will; still, I don't think our own selfish considerations should detain him against his better judgment.'

'I am eager to see Cripps's partners,' said Claude, vacillating. 'They may know more about it.'

'And solicitors are such trying people,' remarked Lady Caroline sympathetically; 'one

always does want to see them personally, to know what they really mean.'

'That's what I feel,' said Claude.

'But what on earth has he to consult them about?' demanded the Home Secretary. 'Everything will keep—except the golf. Besides, my dear fellow, you are perfectly safe in the hands of Maitland, Hollis, Cripps and Company. A fine steady firm, and yet pushing too. I recollect they were the first solicitors in London.'—

'Were!' said his wife significantly.

'To supply us with typewritten briefs, my love. Now there is little else. In such hands, my dear Claude, your interests are quite undramatically safe.'

'Still,' said Claude, 'it's an important matter; and I am, after all, for the moment, the head of'—

'I'll tell you what you are,' cried the politician, with a burst of that hot brutality which had formerly made him the wholesome terror of the Junior Bar; 'you're a confounded minor Cockney poet! If you want to go back to your putrid midnight oil, go back to it; if you want to get out of the golf, get out of it! I'm off. I shouldn't like to be rude to you, Claude, my boy, and I may be if I remain. No doubt I shall be able to pick up somebody down at the links.'

Claude struck his flag.

A minute later, Olivia, from the broad bay window, watched the lank, handsome poet and the sturdy, white-haired statesman hurrying along the Marina arm-in-arm; both in knickerbockers and Norfolk jackets; and each carrying a quiverful of golf-clubs in his outer hand.

The girl was lost in thought.

'Olivia,' said a voice behind her, 'your father behaved like a brute!'

'I didn't think so; it was all in good part. And it will do him so much good!'

'Do whom?'

'Poor Claude! Of course he is dreadfully cut up.'

'Then why did he pretend to be pleased?'

'That was his pluck. He took it splendidly. I never admired him so much!'

Lady Caroline opened her mouth to speak, but shut it again without a word. Her daughter's slight figure was silhouetted against the middle window of the bow; the sun put a golden crown upon the fair young head; yet the head was bent, and the girl's whole attitude was one of pity and of thought. Lady Caroline Sellwood rose quietly, and left the room.

That species of low cunning, which was one of her Ladyship's traits, had placed her for once in a rather neat dilemma. Claude Lafont had cast poet's eyes at Olivia for months and years; and for weeks and months Olivia's mother had wished there were less poetry and more passion in the composition of that aristocrat. He would not say what nobody else, not even Lady Caroline, could say for him. He was content to dangle and admire; he had called Olivia his 'faery queen' with his lips and with his pen, in private and in print; but he had betrayed no immediate desire to call her his wife. Lady Caroline had recommended him to marry, and he had denounced marriage as 'the death of romance.' Quite sure in her own mind that she was dealing with none other than the Duke of St Osmund's, it was her

Ladyship who had planneded the present small party (which her distinguished husband would call a 'four-some') for the Easter Recess. Flatly disbelieving in the existence of the alleged Australian heir, she had seen the merit of engaging Olivia to Claude before the latter assumed his title in the eyes of the world. That the title was his to assume, when he liked, had been the opinion of all the Lafonts, save Claude himself, from the very first; and, when it suited her, Lady Caroline Sellwood was very well pleased to consider herself a Lafont. In point of fact, her mother had borne that illustrious name before her marriage with the impecunious Earl Clennell of Ballycawley; and Lady Caroline was herself a great-granddaughter of the sixth Duke of St Osmund's.

The sixth Duke (who exerted himself to make the second half of the last century rather wicked than the first) had two sons, of whom her present Ladyship's grandfather was the younger. The elder became the seventh Duke, and begot the eighth (and most respectable) Duke of St Osmund's;—the aged peer lately deceased. The eighth Duke, again, had but two sons, who both predeceased him. These two sons were, respectively, Claude's father and the unmentionable Marquis of Maske. The Marquis was a man after the heart of his worst ancestor, a fascinating blackguard, neither more nor less. At twenty-four he had raised the temperature of his native air to a degree incompatible with his own safety; and had fled the country never to return. Word of his death was received from Australia in the year 1866. He had died horribly, from thirst in the wilderness, and yet a proper compassion was impossible even after that. For the news was accompanied by a letter from the dead man's hand—scrawled at his last gasp, and pinned with his knife to the tree under which the body was found—yet composed in a vein of revolting cynicism, and containing further news of the most embarrassing description. The Marquis was leaving behind him—somewhere in Australia—at the moment he really could not say where—a small Viscount Dillamore to inherit ultimately the title and estates. He gave no dates; his wife was dead. To the best of his belief, however, the lad was alive; and might be known by the French eagle of the Lafonts, which the father had himself tattooed upon his little chest.

This was all the clue which had been left to Claude, to follow on a bad man's bare word or to ignore at his own discretion. For reasons best known to himself, the old Duke had taken no steps to discover the little Marquis. Unluckily, however, his late grace had not been entirely himself for many years before his death; and those reasons had never transpired. Claude, on the other hand, was a man of fastidious temperament, a person of infinite scruples, with a morbid horror of the incorrect. He would spend half the morning deciding between a semicolon and a full stop; and he was consistently conscientious in matters of real moment, as, for example, in that of his marriage. He had been asking himself, for quite a twelve-month, whether he really loved Olivia; he had no intention of asking *her* until he was quite convinced on the point. To such a man there was but one course possible on the old Duke's death. And Claude had taken it, with the worst results.

'He has no sympathy from me,' said Lady
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Caroline bitterly, as she went upstairs. 'He has cut his own throat, and there's an end of it; except that if he thinks he's going to marry any daughter of mine, after this, he is very much mistaken.'

It was extremely mortifying all the same; to have prepared the ground so carefully, to have arranged every preliminary for a match which had now to be abandoned altogether; and worse still, to have turned away half the eligible young men in town for the sake of a Duke who was not a Duke at all. Lady Caroline Sellwood had three daughters. The eldest had made a good, solid, military marriage, and enjoyed in India a social position that was not unworthy of her. The second daughter had not done quite so well; still her husband, the Rev. Francis Freke, was a divine whose birth was better than his attainments, so that there was every chance of seeing his little legs in gaiters before either foot was in his grave. But Olivia was her youngest ('my ewe lamb,' Lady Caroline used to call her—though there were none of any other description): and in further respects she was fitted for a better fate than that which had befallen either of her sisters. Olivia was the prettiest of the three. Her little fair head, 'running over with curls,' as Claude never tired of saying, was made by nature with a self-evident view to strawberry-leaves and twinkling tiaras. And Lady Caroline meant it to wear them yet.

She had done her best to encourage Claude in his inclination to run up to town at once. The situation at the seaside had become charged with danger. Not only was it clear to Lady Caroline that the poet was at last satisfied with the state of his own affections, but she had reason to fear that Claude Lafont would have a better chance with Olivia than would the Duke of St Osmund's. The child was peculiar. She had read too much, and there was a suspiciously sentimental strain in her. Her acute mother did not imagine her 'vulgarly in love' (as she called it) with the æsthetic Claude; but she had heard him tell the girl that 'pity from her' was 'more dear than that from another;' and it was precisely this pity which Lady Caroline now dreaded as fervently as she would have welcomed it the day before. Her stupid husband had outwitted her in the matter of Claude's departure. Lady Caroline was hardly at the top of the stair before she had made up the masterly mind which she considered at least a match for her stupid husband's. He would not allow her to get rid of Claude? Very well; nothing simpler. She would get rid of Olivia instead.

The means suggested itself almost as quickly as the end.

Lady Caroline took a little walk to the post-office, and said she had been on the pier. In a couple of hours a telegram arrived from Mrs Freke, begging Olivia to go to her at once. Lady Caroline was apparently overwhelmed with surprise. But she despatched her ewe lamb by the next train.

'Olivia, I won both rounds!' called out the Home Secretary when he strutted in towards evening, pink and beaming. Claude also looked the better and brighter for his day; but Lady Caroline took the brightness out of him in an instant, and the Home Secretary beamed no more that night.

'It is no use your calling Olivia,' said her Ladyship calmly; 'by this time she must be a hundred miles away. You needn't look so startled, George. You know the state to which poor Francis reduces himself by the end of Lent; and you know that dear Mary's baby is not thriving as it ought. I shouldn't wonder if he makes it fast, too! At all events Mary telegraphed for Olivia this morning, and I let her go. Now it's no use being angry with any of us! With a young baby and a half-starved husband it was a very natural request. There's the telegram on the mantelpiece for you to see for yourself what she says.'

CHAPTER II.—'HAPPY JACK.'

A DILETTANTE in letters, a laggard in love, and a pedant in much of his speech, Claude Lafont was nevertheless possessed of certain graces of the heart and head which entitled him at all events to the kindly consideration of his friends. He had enthusiasm, and some soul; he had an open hand and an essentially simple mind. These were the merits of the man. They were less evident than his foibles, which, indeed, continually obscured them. He would have been the better for one really bad fault: but nature had not salted him with a single vice.

Unpopular at Eton, he had found his feet perhaps a little too firmly at Oxford. There his hair had grown long and his views detestable. Had the old Duke of St Osmund's been in his right mind at the time he would certainly have quitted it at the report of some of his grandson's contributions to the university debates. Claude, however, had the courage of his most ridiculous opinions, and even at Oxford he was a man whom it was possible to respect. The era of Toynbee Hall and a gentlemanly, kid-gloved socialism came a little later; there were other and intermediate phases, into which it is unnecessary to enter. Claude came through them all with two things, at least, as good as new: his ready enthusiasm and his excellent heart.

Whether he really did view the new twist in his life with the satisfaction which he professed is an open and immaterial question; all that is certain or important is the fact that he did not permit himself to repine. He was never in better spirits than in the six weeks' interval between the receipt of Mr Cripps's cable and that gentleman's arrival with the new Duke. Claude divided the time between the proofs of his new volume of poems and conscientious preparations for the proper reception of his noble cousin. He had the mansion in Belgrave Square, which had fallen of late years into disuse, elaborately done up, repapered, and fitted throughout with new hangings and the electric light. He felt it his duty to hand over the house in a cleanly and habitable state; and he was accustomed to work his duty rather hard. He ran down to Maske Towers, the principal family seat, repeatedly, and had certain renovations carried out as far as possible under his own eye. In every direction he did more than he need have done. And so the time passed very busily, quite happily, and with an interest that was kept green to the last by the utter absence of any shred of information concerning the ninth Duke of St Osmund's.

Claude had even no idea as to whether he was

a married man. So he legislated for a wife and family. And his worst visions were of a hulking, genial, sheep-farming Duke, with a tribe of very terrible little Lords and Ladies, duly frightened of their gigantic father, but paying not the slightest attention to the anæmic Duchess who all day scolded them through her freckled nose.

Mr Cripps's letters continued to arrive by each week's mail; but they were still written with a shake of the head and a growing deprecation of the wild-goose chase in which the lawyer now believed himself to be unworthily engaged. Towards the end of May, however, the letters stopped. The last one was written on the eve of an expedition up the country, on a mere off-chance, to find out more about one John Dillamore, whom Mr Cripps had heard of as a resident of the Riverina. Claude Lafont knew well what had come of that off-chance. It had turned the tide of his life. But no letter came from the Riverina; the next communication was a telegram from Brindisi, saying they had left the ship and were travelling overland; and the next after that, another telegram stating the hour at which they hoped to land at Dover.

Claude Lafont had just time enough to put on his hat, to stop the hansom for an instant at the house in Belgrave Square, and to catch the 12.5 from Victoria.

It was a lovely day in early June. There was neither a cloud in the sky nor the white crest of a wave out at sea; the one was as serenely blue as the other; and the *Calais-Douvre* rode in with a high-bred calm and dignity all in key with the occasion. Claude boarded her before he had any right, with a sudden dereliction of his characteristic caution. And there was old Cripps, sunburnt and grim, with a soft felt hat upon his head, and a strange spasmodic twitching at the corners of the mouth.

'Here you are!' cried Claude, gripping hands. 'Well, where is he?'

The lawyer's lips went in and out, and a rough-looking by-stander chuckled audibly.

'One thing quickly,' whispered Claude: 'is he a married man?'

'No, he isn't.'

The by-stander laughed outright. Claude favoured him with a haughty glance.

'His servant, I presume?'

'No,' said Cripps hoarsely. 'I must introduce you. The Duke of St Osmund's—your kinsman, Mr Claude Lafont.'

Claude felt the painful pressure of a horny fist; and gasped.

'Proud to meet you, mister,' said the Duke.

'So delighted to meet and welcome you,' said Claude faintly.

'I'm afraid I'm a rough cuss,' continued the Duke. 'You'd have done as well to leave me where I was. Please to call me Jack.'

'You knew, of course, what would happen sooner or later?' said Claude, with a sickly smile.

'Not me. My colonial oath, I did *not*! Never dreamt of it till I seen *him*!'—with a jerk of his wideawake towards Mr Cripps. It was a very different felt hat from that gentleman's; the crown rose like a sugar-loaf nine inches from the head; the brim was nearly as many inches wide; and where the felt touched the temples it was

strained through and through with ancient perspiration.

'And I can't sight it now !' added his Grace.

'Nevertheless it's true,' said Mr Cripps.

Claude was taking in the matted beard, the peeled nose, the round shoulders, and the bow-legs of the ninth Duke. He was a bushman from top to toe.

'What luggage have you?' exclaimed Claude, with a sudden effort. 'We must get it ashore.'

'This is all,' said the Duke with a grin.

It lay on the deck at their feet; a long cylinder whose outer case was an old blue blanket, very neatly rolled and strapped; an Australian saddle, with enormous knee-flaps, black with age; and an extraordinary cage like a rabbit-hutch. The cage was full of cats. The Duke insisted on carrying it ashore himself.

'This is the man?' whispered Claude, jealously, to Mr Cripps.

'The man himself; there's the eagle on his chest as large as life.'

'But it might be a coincidence'—

'It might be, but it isn't,' replied Cripps shortly. 'He's the Duke all right; the papers I shall show you are quite conclusive. I own he doesn't look the part. He's not tractable. He would come as he is. I heaved one old hat overboard; but he had a worse in his swag. However, no one on board knew who he was. I took care of that.'

'God bless you, Cripps!' said Claude Lafont.

He had reserved a first-class carriage. The Duke half-filled it with his cat-cage, which he stoutly declined to trust out of his sight. There were still a few minutes before the train would start. Claude and Cripps exchanged sympathetic glances.

'I think we ought to drink the Duke's health,' said Claude, who for once felt the need of a stimulant himself.

'I think so too,' said Mr Cripps.

'Then make 'em lock the door,' stipulated his Grace. 'I wouldn't risk my cats being shook, not for drinks as long as your leg !'

A grinning guard came forward with his key. The Duke 'mistered' him, and mentioned where his cats came from, as he got out.

'Very kind of you to shout for me,' he continued as they filed into the refreshment room; 'but why the blazes don't you call me Jack? Happy Jack's my name, that's what they used to call me up the bush. I'm not going to stop being Jack, or happy either, 'cause I'm a Dook; if I did, I'd jolly soon sling it. Shoot me dead! why don't you give the whisky to me, my dear, and let me help myself, like they do up the bush? English fashion, is it? And you call that drop a nobbler, do you, in the old country? Well, well; here's fun !'

The Duke's custodians were not sorry to get him back beside his cats. They were really glad when the train started. The Duke was in high spirits. The whisky had loosened his tongue.

'Like cats, old man?' he inquired of Claude.

'Then I hope you'll make friends with mine. They were my only mates, year in, year out, up at the hut. I wasn't going to leave 'em there when they'd stood by me so long; not likely; so here they are. See that black 'un in the corner? I call her Black Maria, and that's her

kitten. She went and had a large family at sea, but this poor little beggar's the only one what lived to tell the tale. That great big Tom, he's the father. I don't think much of Tom, but it would have been a shame to leave him behind. No, sir; my favourite's the little tortoise-shell with the game leg. He got cotched in a rabbit trap last shearing-time; he's the most adventurous little cat that ever was, so I call him Livingstone. I've known him explore five miles from the hut, when there wasn't a drop of water or a blade of food in the paddicks, and yet come back as fat as butter. A little caution, I tell you! Out you come, Livingstone !'

Claude thought he had never seen a more ill-favoured animal. To call it tortoise-shell was to misuse the word. It was simply yellow; it ran on three legs; and its nose had been recently scarified by an enemy's claws.

'No, I'm full up of Tom,' pursued the Duke, fondling his pet. 'Look what he done on board to Livingstone's nose! I nearly slung him over the side. Poor little puss, then, poor little puss! You may well purr, old boy; there's a live Lord scratching your head.'

'Meaning me?' said Claude genially; there was a kindness in the rugged face, as it bent over the little yellow horror, that appealed to the poet.

'Meaning you, of course.'

'But I'm not one.'

'You're not? What a darned shame! Why, you ought to be a Dook. You'd make a better one than me !'

The family solicitor was half-hidden behind that morning's *Times*; as Jack spoke he hid himself entirely. Claude, for his part, saw nothing to laugh at. The Duke's face was earnest. The Duke's eyes were dark and kind. Like Claude himself, he had the long Lafont nose, though sun and wind had peeled it red; and a pair of shaggy brown eyebrows gave strength at all events to the hairy face. Claude was thinking that half-an-hour at Truefitt's, a pot of vaseline, and the best attentions of his own tailors in Maddox Street, would make a new man of Happy Jack. Not that his suit was on a par with his abominable wideawake. He could not have worn these clothes in the bush. They were obviously his best; and, as obviously, ready-made.

Happy Jack was meantime apostrophising his pet.

'Ah! but you was with me when that there gentleman found me, wasn't you, Livingstone? You should tell the other gentleman about that. We never thought we was a Dook, did we? We thought ourselves a blooming ordinary common man. My colonial oath, and so we are! But you recollect that last bu'st of ours, Livingstone? I mean the time we went to knock down the thirty-one pound cheque, what never got knocked down properly at all. We had a rare thirst on us'—

Mr Cripps in his corner smacked down the *Times* on his knees.

'Look there!' he cried enthusiastically. 'Did ever you see such grass as that, Jack? You've nothing like it in New South Wales. I declare it does my old heart good to see an honest green field again !'

Jack looked out for an instant only.

'Ten sheep to the acre,' said he laconically. 'Wonderful, isn't it, Livingstone? And you an' me used to ten acres to the sheep! But we were talking about that last little spree; you want your Uncle Claude to hear all about it, I see you do; you're not the cat to make yourself out better than what you are; not you, Livingstone! Well, as I was saying'—

'Those red-tiled roofs are simply charming!' exclaimed the solicitor.

'A perfect poem,' said Claude.

'And that May-tree in full bloom!'

'A living lyric,' said Claude.

It was really apple-blossom.

'And you,' cried the Duke to his cat, 'you're a comic song, that's what you are! Tell 'em you won't be talked down, Livingstone. Tell this gentleman he's got to hear the worst. Tell him that when the other gentleman found us—the solicitor raised his *Times* with a shrug—'one of us was drunk, drunk, drunk; and the other was watching over him—and the other was my little cat!'

'You're joking, of course?' said Claude, with a flush.

'Not me, mister. That's a fact. You see, it was like this'—

'Thanks,' said Claude hastily; 'but I'd far rather not know.'

'Why not, old toucher?'

'It would hurt me,' said Claude, with a shudder.

'Hurt you! Hear that, Livingstone? It would hurt him to hear how we knocked down our last little cheque! That's the best thing I've heard since I left the ship!'

'Nevertheless it's the case.'

'And do you mean to tell me you were never like that yourself?'

'Never in my life.'

'Well, shoot me dead!' whispered the Duke, in his amazement.

'It ought not to surprise you,' said Claude, in a tone that set the *Times* shaking in the far corner of the carriage.

'It does, though. I can't help it. You're the first I've ever met that could say as much.'

'Pray let us drop the subject; I can bear to hear no more. You have pained me more than I can say!'

Claude's flush had deepened; his supersensitive soul was indeed scandalised, and so visibly, that an answering flush showed upon the Duke's mahogany features, like an extra coat of polish.

'I've pained you!' he echoed, dropping his cat. 'I'm very sorry then. I am so! I had no intention of doing any such thing. All I wanted was to fly my true flag at once, like, and have done with it. And I've pained you; and you bet I'll go on paining you all the time! How can I help it? I'm not what us bushmen call a parlour-man, though I may be a Dook; but neither the one nor the other is my fault. You should have let me be in the bush. I was all right there—all right with my hut and my cats. I'd never known anything better. I never knew who I was. What did it matter if I knocked down my cheque when I got full up of the cats and the hut? Nobody thinks anything of that up the bush. The boss used always to take me on again; some day

I'll tell you about my old boss; he was the best friend ever I had. A real gentleman, who thought no worse of you so long's it only happened now and then. But see here! It shall never happen again. It didn't matter in the boundary rider, but p'raps it might in the Dook. Anyhow I'm strict T T from this moment; that whisky at Dover shall be my last. And I'm darned sorry I pained you, and—and dash it, here's my fist on it for good and all!'

It is difficult to say which hand wrung the harder. Claude was not pleased with himself; the conscious lack of some quality, which the other possessed, was afflicting him with a novel and entirely unexpected sense of inferiority. He was as yet unsure what the missing quality was; he hardly suspected it of being a virtue; but it was new to Claude to have these feelings at all.

He said not another word upon the embarrassing subject; but fell presently into a train of thought that kept him silent until they steamed into Victoria. There the conquering Cripps was met by his wife and daughters; but Claude managed to get a few more words with him as they were waiting to have the baggage passed.

'I like him,' said Claude.

'So do I,' was the reply; 'and I know him well.'

'I like his honesty.'

'He is honesty itself. I did my best just now to keep him from giving himself away—but that was his deliberate game. Mark you, what he insisted on telling you was quite true; but on the whole he has behaved excellently ever since.'

'Well, as long as he doesn't confess his sins to everybody he meets!'

'No fear of that; he looks on you as still the head of the family, with a sort of *ex officio* right to know the worst. His own position he doesn't realise a bit. Yet some day I expect to see him at least as fit to occupy it as one or two others; and you are the man to make him so. You will only require two things.'

The great doors opened inwards, and the travellers surged in to claim their luggage, with Mr Cripps at their head. Claude caught him by the elbow as he was pointing out his trunks.

'Those two things?' said he.

'Yes, those two, with my initials on each.'

'No, but the two things that I shall need?'

'Oh, those! Plenty of patience, and plenty of time.'

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

SOME one has said that every man has within him the materials for at least one book of surpassing interest—were he able to write it—in his own mental and spiritual history. If any man could and would produce a perfectly faithful record of all he had thought, and felt, and experienced, neither concealing nor extenuating anything, he would write a book of unique interest and value. But such a book never will be written. There are many autobiographies, but none which fully answers these requirements. The value and interest of an autobiography, however, depend largely upon the degree in which the writer is able and willing to approach the standard stated above. It is this approach to complete self-revelation—the turning of the writer's self inside

out, so to speak—which has given lasting interest to such works as Benvenuto Cellini's life of himself and Mr Samuel Pepys's *Diary*.

Thackeray had little belief in autobiographies. In his delightful essay on Steele, he says that he doubts all he ever read—'except those, perhaps, of *Mr Robinson Crusoe*, *Mariner*, and writers of his class. These have no object in setting themselves right with the public or their own consciences; these have no motive for concealment or half-truths; these call for no more confidence than I can cheerfully give, and do not force me to tax my credulity or to fortify it by evidence.' This is an admirable summing up of the reasons why the perfect autobiography never will be written. The best of autobiographers has still his eye upon the public, and is at the trouble of setting things right with his conscience; if he miss the Scylla of concealment he falls into the Charybdis of half-truth. Lamb also disliked autobiographies. Writing to Cowden Clarke on one occasion, he said: 'Your books are as the gushing of streams in a desert. By the way, you have sent no autobiographies. Your letter seems to imply you had. Nor do I want any, Cowden; they are of the books which I give away.' And yet such books form not the least valuable part of our literature.

Of late years we have had autobiography run to seed. Recollections, reminiscences, and the like have poured from the press in overwhelming numbers. Few of these books have possessed much lasting value. But among the older works of the class there are not a few of permanent interest and value. These are, as a rule, of two classes. There is first the autobiography the interest of which is almost entirely subjective, which consists, that is to say, in the record of thought and emotion, in the revelation of the writer's inner life. Conspicuous in this class are such works as the *Autobiography* of John Stuart Mill and the *Confessions* of Jean Jacques Rousseau and of St Augustine. More recently we have had the *Journal Intime* of Amiel, and one or two other similar personal records. Books of this kind are apt to degenerate into mere morbid, unhealthy introspection. Few, indeed, altogether escape this morbid taint. Rousseau's *Confessions* are especially tinged with it. Perhaps the most outstanding and wholesome work in this class of self-portraiture is the *Apologia* of the late Cardinal Newman.

The second class of autobiographical books is much the larger, and, to the great majority of readers, by far the more interesting of the two. These are the records whose interest is chiefly, or largely, objective, which relate to the writer's history and times in connection with his outer life. The number of such books is very great. Pepys's *Diary* may be taken as the typical example. In this wonderful book the reader not only comes into touch with a quaint personality, whose frankness regarding his own peccadillos is little short of marvellous, and whose self-revelation is a curiosity of naïve un-self-consciousness, but he sees passing before his eyes the life of the Londoners of two hundred years ago, portrayed with all those touches of detail which make the picture so life-like and real. With the *Diary* in his hand, the reader of to-day can live through the days of uncertainty and excitement that preceded the restoration of Charles II.; he can watch the triumphal return of the exiled king;

make innumerable visits to the playhouses; mingle with the crowds who thronged the coffee-houses and taverns; see all the curiosities of the town; shudder at the plague settles upon the doomed city, and the dead-cart makes its frequent rounds through the grass-grown streets; watch the mighty blaze of burning London, and, having followed the animated chronicle to its close, he can realise that therein have the dry bones of history been made to live. Evelyn's *Diary* is of great value, but is much less interesting to read.

Autobiographies of this class can be found to suit every taste. If the reader be interested in dramatic history, in the records of theatrical rivalry and vanity, he will find in Colley Cibber's *Apology for his own Life*, which Swift sat up all night to read, a mine of inexhaustible interest. For students of general history there are innumerable memoirs, such as those of Sully, which Mr Stanley Weyman has turned to such excellent account in providing the background and the colouring for his vivacious historical studies; autobiographies such as those of the historian Edward Gibbon (a new edition of whose seven autobiographies has just appeared), and others too numerous to mention. For lovers of adventure there are Lord Herbert of Cherbury's *Life of himself*; Robert Drury's narrative of his adventures in Madagascar; Cellini's wonderful record of imprisonment and escape, of rascality, crime, and marvellous artistic creativeness; Lackington the bookseller's amusing record of his sayings and doings, with many more.

There is one kind of autobiography, and that not the least interesting, which includes books that, strictly speaking, are not autobiographies at all. There are, for example, the delightful volumes of Walpole's gossiping letters, and the narrative of Cowper's life, written by himself, in his charming epistles to his various friends. The four volumes of Southey's *Letters*, again, contain a most interesting and practically unbroken record of the aims and labours of that most industrious man of letters. Similarly Lamb's *Letters* present a picture of the writer with which it would be difficult for any biographer to compete. Other autobiographical records may be found in such books as Gilbert White's *Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne*, and in the volumes of Thoreau's notes and reflections, which have, from time to time, been collected from his diaries and note-books, and published under the names of the seasons of the year.

Every reader will be able to call up pleasant emotions and memories of happy and instructive hours spent over books which fall into one or other of the above classes, or, maybe, a mixture of both. For instance, it is difficult to classify Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, which is essentially autobiographical; and so are the letters by its author in Froude's biography. Burns left an autobiographical fragment, and so did Sir Walter Scott—a fragment which every reader wishes had been much longer. General Gordon's *Letters to his Sister* are essentially autobiographical, and their main interest springs from the personality of the writer, whom they reveal in every sentence. The same may be said of Byron's letters. Leigh Hunt's autobiography also reveals the man in his strength and weakness. A modern example of autobiography is a

gathering of testimonies from different eminent individuals as to the *Books which have Influenced me*. A popular Edinburgh divine (Dr Alexander Whyte), in drawing up a list of the great autobiographies, scriptural, spiritual, mystical, and intellectual, for use in a class for young men and women, set down over forty. These included, besides some already mentioned, the *Apology and Memorials of Socrates*; *Josephus*; *Knox's letters*; *Bacon's letters*; *Laud's Troubles, Diary, and Devotions*; *Thomas Goodwin's autobiography*; *Rutherford's letters*; *John Livingstone's autobiography*; *Baxter's Reliquiæ*; *George Fox's Journal*; *Bunyan's Grace Abounding*; *Madame Guyon's autobiography*; *Thomas Boston's autobiography*; *Wesley's Journal*; *John Foster's Essays in a Series of Letters* (and in this connection his essay on 'A Man's writing Memoirs of Himself' should be read); *Coleridge's Biographia Literaria*; *Harriet Martineau's autobiography*; *Hugh Miller's Schools and Schoolmasters*; and *John Ruskin's Præterita*. The list could be indefinitely extended, but sufficient have been named to show the wealth of this department of literature.

What with journals and letters, diaries, recollections, reminiscences, as well as professed autobiographies, there is indeed an immense mass of literature which may be classed under the head of self-history. Those who hold with Pope that the proper study for mankind is man, need be at no loss for material for their study. And even amongst that larger body of readers who read only for amusement and pastime, it is clear, from the success of the many gossiping books of the autobiographical class which have been published in recent years, that literature of the personal kind is equally popular.

A CHILD OF TONKING.

By GUY BOOTHBY,

Author of *The Fascination of the King*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

If you take a small map of Asia, and place the point of your nail upon the Tropic of Cancer at Tipperah, in British India, and run it along the dotted line eastward through Upper Burma into China, only pausing when you are in the Province of Kwangsi, you will find that the top of your finger covers a portion of the French colony of Tonking, better known to the world as Indo-China. It is in the northernmost quarter of that country, just where the Song Tam separates the French possession from the Celestial Empire, that the scene of this story is laid. It is not an altogether civilised neighbourhood, although much money has been spent in an attempt to make it so. Upon the chart, the sea thereabouts is pockmarked with numberless small shoals, rocks, and islands, and when the Admiralty condescends to take cognisance of it in print the yellow books of the China Sea Directory warn mariners to beware lest by imprudent navigation they fall into the hands of the most notorious pirates along the whole of the Asiatic coast. In fact, it is asserted that some few thousands of these gentry, and the handful of Frenchmen sent to guard the frontier, constitute the entire population of the district.

To say that soldiering in this region is unlike the same occupation in other countries would scarcely be to state my meaning. The Burman, or Dacoit, is apt to make things lively for Tommy Atkins in the neighbourhood of Bhamo, the Afghan exterminates him after his own fashion beyond Peshawur; the Russian soldier has to put up with numberless inconveniences at Vladivostock, as has the German in East Africa; but the lives of all these are bloated luxury compared with that of the French soldier upon the northernmost border of Tonking.

In the first place, to be there at all, he must be a member of the Foreign Legion; and to anyone who knows the force that fact will speak for itself. To those who have not so much knowledge, the following information may be of service. To begin with, the French Foreign Legion is recruited from all ranks, classes, and conditions of men. Discarded sons of princes parade shoulder by shoulder with the pickpocket and burglar of the Paris slum; ex-clerics dip into the same mess-kid with the runaway murderer of the Rue du Temple; deserters from crack regiments go on fatigue duty with defaulting bank cashiers; and yet, unless the man is recognised, or the police have special reasons for stepping in, no one concerns himself at all as to what his past life may have been. Every sort of villain and every style of villainy is represented within the four walls of the barrack-room; and unhappy, indeed, is the lot of the recruit in whom there lingers one spark of anything above the level of the brute. Those who have had experience would ask us to believe that the talk of an English barrack-room is not of an over-cultivated order; that the similes indulged in by the occupants of the fo'c'sle of a merchantman are not as delicate as they might be; but Tommy Atkins and Jack, at their worst, are as modest and as alive to the proprieties as a girls' school, compared with the rank and file of the force I am now referring to. It will, therefore, be easily understood that the officers commanding are vested with peculiar powers, and that, in the course of their training, they develop iron wills and nerves of whip-cord. Their men are ruled with the heaviest of hands. Indeed, the discipline of a convict prison is child's play compared with it. Their life is devoid of all pleasure. On one side is the regiment, with its tyrannical routine, its total lack of comfort, its villainous associations, its fever, and its general future hopelessness; while, on the other, not half-a-mile distant, lie in wait the enemy and death by the cruellest torture the inventive brain of man can devise. The fate of one officer who fell into their hands, and was slowly pricked to death by thousands of tiny bamboo skewers, driven in with a mallet—and of another who had his skin stripped off him while alive, in a public place, and to the accompaniment of insulting jeers—may serve for examples. Not for an instant, by day or night, is vigilance in the fort relaxed. No Chinaman from across the river is allowed within musket range of the stockade on any pretext whatsoever; a light at night is sufficient to insure a volley, and scarcely a watch goes by without a bullet whistling past the sentry's head. Not once, but scores of times, the latter have been found, when

the time came to relieve guard, lying with their throats cut at their posts, the murderer's method of making his way in through the palisading remaining a mystery that no amount of search seemed able to unravel.

In this salubrious spot, which for the purpose of our narrative we will designate Conday, it would have struck an outsider as impossible to find one single circumstance that made life worth the living. The fort, consisting of the commandant's residence, the officers' quarters, and the barracks themselves, is surrounded by a double stockade and ramparts of earth beaten hard. It is perched on a slight eminence, and commands a view of the entire valley through which the river runs and of the town, in Chinese territory, upon the farther bank. The garrison, in the days of which I am writing, consisted of the commandant (a married man), six officers, and a hundred and fifty rank and file, probably the offscouring of the entire French army. Of the commandant, Colonel La Vigne, little need be said. He was a fine soldier, a fearless leader, a disciplinarian as strict as his own code of honour; and, what was strange when you consider the sort of folk with whom he had to deal, as just as he was hard. There was one mystery about him that none who knew him could solve, and that was how he came to marry the woman who was now his wife. She was Parisian to the tips of her fingers, as vulgar as any *grisette* and as artificial as her own complexion. What had induced her to follow her husband to Tonking was the riddle so many had asked themselves, and had been unable to answer—for that there was no love lost between them every one was aware. Paris was her Mecca, fashion was her god; and away from the joys of one and the worship of the other she professed herself almost unable to live.

When the circumstances occurred that brought about the story I have set myself to tell you, it was the end of a long spell of very hot weather, and towards the beginning of the wet season. In the fort, for the enemy across the border had been unusually quiet of late, existence was one long stagnation. There was no necessity for extra drill; the buildings and earthworks had been patched up over and over again, and needed no more attention; and now there was nothing but the eternal round of garrison duty, the successions of punishments, an occasional duel to the death, perpetual games of dominoes and cards for pay months overdue, and now and again an incurable case of madness, to keep the men from taking their own lives out of sheer hatred of the terrible monotony.

In the long, bare orderly-room—whose one window looked over the stockade into the valley, and through whose open door a glimpse might be obtained of the dazzling white barrack square, in which the heat haze danced and reeled—three men were seated at a wooden table. The person in the centre was the commandant, La Vigne, on his right was the adjutant, and on his left the captain of No. 2 Company. Before them, guarded by a file of soldiers with fixed bayonets, stood a man whose stature could scarcely have been less than six foot six. Upon the regimental books he figured as Jean Dupois, a native of the province of Auvergne, and his official number was 43,182. If one had searched the army register of France

it would have been scarcely possible to find a more extraordinary person. His hair was red, his face broad, flat, and quite motionless, his shoulders gave evidence as to his enormous strength, which indeed was proverbial among his comrades. To his other accomplishments he added that of being a first-rate swordsman, a fire-eater of the most determined description. In private life he had been a burglar of no mean order, and a blackguard and irreclaimable ruffian generally. On this occasion, not the first by many a score, he was being arraigned on a charge of having stolen two bottles of cognac from the quarters of one of the officers of his company. This accusation he strenuously denied; but the fact that he had been found hopelessly intoxicated on the previous evening, within two hours of the bottles' disappearance, that he had no store of his own, and that he had not entered the canteen for two days past, owing to his lack of funds, was held to be conclusive proof of his culpability.

When the evidence of the officer's servant had been given, Long Jean, as he was nicknamed by the regiment, was asked what he had to say in his own defence. His answer was a total denial of the charge in question. He had not been near the quarters for many months past; he had no knowledge that the officer possessed any brandy; and in conclusion he was prepared to prove that he was not drunk as had been alleged.

The colonel's mouth closed like a vice. He drummed with his fingers upon the table, while he watched the prisoner steadily for upwards of a minute. Then he spoke.

'This is the third time,' he said. 'Twenty-five strokes—on the next occasion it will be fifty.'

There was not the slightest expression upon the prisoner's countenance as he saluted, and allowed his guards to lead him through the door into the blazing heat outside.

'Twenty-five strokes of bamboo for two small bottles of cognac, Jean,' said the sergeant in command of the party. 'Thou wouldst have been served cheaper in the canteen, my friend.'

Jean, however, did not reply. It was not the first time he had suffered the same punishment, and, as far as he could see, it was not likely to be the last. What use, therefore, in complaining of his hard fate? He was not in the least ashamed, and he had no desire that it should be thought he was.

Leaving the orderly-room behind them, they turned into the smaller square which separated the two barrack buildings from the kitchens and stores. In the centre of the open space was a substantial post, the use of which the culprit knew full well. As he approached it he divested himself of his tunic with a business-like air. His rough shirt followed, his wrists were buckled in the straps intended to receive them, and, when this had been accomplished, the stalwart drummer laid on twenty-five blows with a thick rattan he had brought with him for that purpose. Hard as were the blows, the culprit did not utter a sound, and when the allotted number had been given, and he had been cast loose, he leisurely remade his toilet, and, nodding to his guard, strolled off in the direction of his own barrack-room as if nothing out of the ordinary had occurred.

It will be readily admitted that to the majority of men such an indignity as had been offered to Long Jean would have been simply unbearable. Life would have become unendurable from that very hour. But the Auvergnat did not regard the matter in at all the same light. He had suffered the same punishment, as his commanding officer had reminded him, twice before for the same offence, and half a hundred times for others. He was of a philosophic disposition, and set what he had received against what he had paid for it. It was true his back was rather more tender than was altogether comfortable, but time would soon set that right, and, when all was said and done, he had the satisfaction of knowing that there was still a half bottle of the stolen brandy hidden in a safe place.

As he entered the veranda which surrounded the barrack building, he became aware of a short, black-haired, swarthy man, with enormous bushy brows, from beneath which his eyes gleamed out like lumps of coal, who was sitting on the doorstep smoking a small clay pipe, called a *brûle-gueule*, which he held in his mouth wrong side uppermost. The name of this individual, or rather his nickname, for no one remembered to have heard his real appellation, was 'the Black Rat,' and he had been known to boast that he was proud to be called by the name of an animal for which he entertained a sincere admiration. Competent critics affirmed that he was, without exception, the ugliest man in the French army of that time. Scraps of his personal history had leaked out now and again, and from them it would appear that he was a Southerner; born, so it was said, at Montpellier. That he had suffered several terms of imprisonment in his own country, and one of transportation to New Caledonia, was also a fact confirmed beyond a doubt. If a love of fighting, the ferocity of a wild beast, and the peculiarity of never knowing when he was beaten, could make a good soldier, then he was undoubtedly one of the best in his country's service; but if a complete hatred of discipline, a total lack of reverence for his superiors, a passionate fondness for strong waters and for making himself disliked among his comrades should be placed on the other side of the ledger, then he was the least desirable of them all. That he and the Auvergnat were sworn comrades, and had been concerned in more than one breach of barrack rules, was a fact which scarcely redounded to the credit of either of them.

'So thou hast caught it again, hast thou?' said the Black Rat as he made way for his comrade to pass into the room.

The other scowled at him.

'I was innocent,' he replied; 'and as soon as my back is well again I will have Pierre's heart out for what he said against me.'

'Innocent?' cried his comrade scornfully. 'And I found thee dead drunk behind the officers' quarters with a bottle in thy hand. *Nom du diable*, Jean, I have warned thee before. This drinking will be the ruin of thee.'

'I had but one bottle,' said Jean dolefully. 'I will swear that I drank but one bottle.'

'In that case the other must have been stolen from thee whilst thou layest snoring like a pig upon the ground.'

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The Black Rat chuckled audibly at the recollection, while the great Auvergnat stood looking down at him in sulky amazement. However, his slow brain was beginning to understand.

'You stole it from me, I see,' he said. 'Nevertheless I will have that *cochon's* weasand between my fingers for the evidence he gave.'

'Bravo, *mon brave*,' cried his tormentor, 'and then it will be four files of thine own company and the barrack wall. Flick! flick! will go the rifles, and thou wilt fall in a big heap, my friend. After that, the poor Black Rat and his comrades will have to dig a grave for thee out yonder. And the weather is so hot!'

The giant cursed him after his own fashion, and swinging into the barrack-room threw himself heavily upon his bed. Since the Black Rat had stolen half his prize it was evident the affair had not been so successful as he had flattered himself.

WOOD-PULP.

IN the year 1870 the steady increase in the demand for paper—and more especially cheap qualities for newspaper purposes—coupled with the steady decrease in the amount of rags obtainable, led to the ingenious discovery that timber, reduced to a state of pulp, and treated with certain acids, would answer admirably for the purposes of paper manufacture. At first the idea was looked upon as interesting rather than commercially important, and the earliest specimens of paper thus made were regarded rather in the light of curiosities. Then some practical-minded persons resolved to start a business in providing papermakers with wood-pulp, and others followed suit; but for ten years little progress was made, and the trade scarcely paid expenses. The pioneers, however, persevered in the enterprise, and since then the industry has undergone expansions so enormous that it is, in many parts of the world, almost changing the face of the earth by the consequent destruction of forest areas; while the new uses that are constantly being found for wood-pulp are so numerous and so extremely varied as to be suggestive of fiction rather than of sober reality.

In North America alone 200,000 acres of forests were denuded during the three years ending 1894, in order to satisfy the demands of about two hundred paper factories, and to-day the American papermakers get about three-fourths of their supply from Canada, where the making of wood-pulp is rapidly becoming one of the most important industries in the Dominion. As showing the expansion it has undergone there, it may be said that, whilst in 1881 the capital invested in wood-pulp mills amounted to \$92,000, the wages to \$15,720, and the product to \$63,300, the census of 1891 showed that the invested capital had increased to \$2,900,907, the wages to \$292,099, and the value of the product to \$1,057,810. Then the exports of wood for pulp increased in value from \$80,000 in 1890 to \$468,000 in 1895; and the exports of the manufactured pulp rose from \$168,180 in 1890 to \$590,874 in 1895. With

her vast forests of coniferous trees, and her abundant water-supply—required alike for motive-power and for use in the process of manufacture—Canada possesses natural advantages which make her a formidable rival of the countries of the old world. Among these Sweden and Norway take the lead, and there the making of wood-pulp has advanced so rapidly that an uneasy feeling has arisen lest the forests of those two countries may not be able to bear the strain. Happily, however, steps are being taken to insure both the replanting of the denuded areas and the covering of new ones, while the important discovery has recently been made that the waste of saw-mills can be used for pulp-making just as well as timber specially felled for that purpose. Inasmuch, too, as Sweden alone has 44,480,000 acres of forest there is no necessity for immediate alarm. Denmark and Finland have also taken to the industry, and a large factory is about to be erected at Archangel for the conversion of timber from Russian forests into wood-pulp. Then Germany had in 1892 close on six hundred wood-pulp factories, which used up in that year 35,000,000 stacked cubic feet of wood, and turned out 200,000 tons of wood-pulp, chiefly for home use; and in addition to these she had seventy factories for the superior kind of pulp known as cellulose, of which 80,000 tons were produced. The German output has, however, increased very substantially since 1892, and there is one mill alone, at Mannheim, which now produces sulphite pulp at the rate of 120 tons a day. Austria-Hungary, too, has gone very extensively into the business.

Our own imports of wood-pulp, which stood at only 12,000 tons in 1873, rose to 139,900 in 1890, and reached the big total of 297,000 tons, representing a value of £1,574,400 in 1895. Most of this came from Norway and Sweden, but there is a hope that before long our 'kith and kin' in Canada will get a larger proportion of the trade. They are certainly preparing to do more than they have ever done before; one of the latest reports speaking of the erection of a new mill on the Rouge River, capable of turning out 200 tons of wood-pulp a day.

The pulp is manufactured chiefly from white pine and spruce, and is either 'mechanical' or 'chemical.' For the former, the wood is stripped of its bark, cut into pieces a foot long, split up, and then placed in a machine where it is forced against rotary stones, which, with the help of a steady flow of water, grind it down and reduce it to the form of pulp. After this, any coarse fragments are removed, further grinding is done, the superfluous water is removed, and the pulp is pressed under heated rollers into sheets, in which condition it is ready for the papermakers. In the case of chemical pulp, the wood is first cut into cubes of the uniform size of an inch or thereabouts, and it is considered essential to extract all the knots, though this is a procedure that causes great trouble. Thus prepared, the wood is put into 'digesters,' in which it is boiled for several hours with a solution either of soda or of sulphite of lime, according to the kind of cellulose (as it is called under these processes) that may be re-

quired, and it is finally produced in sheets, as in the case of the mechanical pulp. The difference between the two qualities is that the mechanical pulp is more granular, and breaks off short; while the chemical pulp, or cellulose, has a distinct fibre, and is therefore more serviceable than the other.

As a proof of the speed at which wood pulp and paper therefrom can be produced, the *Grafenauer Anzeiger* recently published a certificate from a notary stating that the *employés* at a certain wood-pulp work and paper-mill in that district had cut down some trees, worked them into pulp, and converted this pulp into paper on which the morning edition of the local newspaper was printed, all within the short space of two hours and twenty-five minutes.

The principal purpose that wood-pulp has hitherto served is in the direction already stated—namely, in the making of the cheaper qualities of paper. But there is also an apparently endless variety of other uses to which it is or can be put. Mixed, for instance, with sulphate of zinc and other chemicals, subjected to great pressure and then dried, wood-pulp can, it is said, be made into building-bricks which weigh less than the third of a clay brick, are impervious to water, and are indestructible. A variation of the process turns the pulp into paving-stones.

In Lancashire it is being used for giving a better finish to cotton goods, and of late an important industry has sprung up in France, and is now being transferred to England, in the spinning of cellulose into artificial silk, which can afterwards be worked up into ladies' dresses, neckties, ribbons, and the numerous other purposes for which natural silk is employed. Then the domestic bucket can be made of wood-pulp, and so can casks, tubs, laboratory utensils, door panels, boats, oars, rafters, and underground tubes for telephone wires. Billiard balls, too, have been made of this Protean substance. Exposed to the atmosphere for a certain time it becomes an absolute solid, and in this condition it is admirably suited for carving work, and can also be turned on the lathe as easily as wood, with the additional advantage that it does not split. In view of this fact, and inasmuch as it will take any colour, it is likely to become an important element in the manufacture of buttons. It has also been moulded into cornices for ceilings, and even the spokes of railway carriage wheels have been replaced by frames filled with cellulose. A particular form of dissolved cellulose, known as viscose, has been found to raise the breaking strength of a five-and-a-half-inch strip of paper of a certain make from ninety pounds to two hundred pounds. It is further claimed for viscose that, used as a size, it not only increases the strength of ordinary paper, but prevents fluff and allows of paper so made being printed on dry.

Then there is an American who mixes wood-pulp with alcohol, litharge, fish glue, shellac, borax, slaked lime, and other things, at different stages, and out of the sheets finally produced stamps heels for ladies' boots. Another maker professes to have found that wood-pulp will serve as raw material for horse-shoes. Still another ingenious person has discovered that,

poured in a liquid state on the floor of a room to the depth of a quarter of an inch or so, and then left a few days to dry, it fills up all the chinks and inequalities, and presents a perfectly level surface for a carpet. In these and various other directions wood-pulp seems destined to play its rôle in almost every department of our daily life; and even when life is over, and we no longer need wood-pulp for paper, silk dresses, buckets, shoe-heels, paving-stones, or carpet-lining, it may still be of service to us in the form of American wood-pulp coffins, which, stained and polished, bear a close resemblance to wood, can be hermetically sealed better than metal, and are warranted to last longer than either.

THE DREAM OF NUMBER THIRTY-ONE.

By W. E. CULE.

'WHY not take an umbrella?' asked Mrs Skelton. 'An umbrella? I should look a perfect dowdy!' exclaimed her daughter, with a fine air of disdain. 'Fancy an umbrella on a day like this—in Regent Street!'

She stood before the mirror, gazing with evident satisfaction at a face which would have been much prettier if it had been less pert.

'I should look a dowdy with an umbrella,' she repeated, with a slight toss of the head; 'almost as great a dowdy as—as Aunt Alice, who always goes about with one.'

'Hush. You must not speak in that way,' said the mother wearily.

Miss Maud smiled. She would have made some cutting reference to an old maxim touching practice and precept, but the moment was not entirely favourable. So she simply remarked, glancing warily towards the couch, while still apparently giving a few final touches to her hair before the mirror—

'I wonder if Aunt Alice could lend me a sunshade. I daresay she has one, though she never uses it.'

'Why don't you ask her?' was the impatient question, as Mrs Skelton took up the book which she had laid aside at her daughter's entrance. 'I wish you wouldn't bother me with your wants. You know Alice is always willing to do what she can for you. Go and ask her yourself.'

The girl paused a little longer, as though in hesitation. This, however, was only a device to cover her eagerness, for she had now obtained what she required—the maternal countenance to another raid upon the private possessions of 'Aunt Alice.'

'I think I will,' she murmured, as if she had at last made up her mind. 'There will be no harm in asking.'

She left the room, closing the door noisily behind her, and Mrs Skelton was not too deeply absorbed in her novel not to hear her daughter's footsteps on the stairs, and, a moment later, in the room above. Then she settled down to her reading, and immediately forgot the whole incident in the exciting history of 'Molly Bawn.'

But in ten minutes Maud returned. She

opened the door with an air of triumph and exhibited her latest acquisition.

'There!' she said proudly; 'I knew she had one. It was all folded up in tissue paper at the bottom of that great box of hers.'

Mrs Skelton looked up with some interest. What she saw was a white silk sunshade, perhaps rather too heavily laced to suit the prevailing mode, but still very pretty and presentable.

'Did Alice give it to you?' she asked curiously.

'No; only lent it,' answered Maud as she opened her prize to admire its still perfect silk. 'She wouldn't part with it for anything, I believe. She wasn't very willing even to lend it at first, but soon gave way. Fancy her never using it! Isn't it pretty!'

'It is a keepsake, I expect,' replied her mother. 'She must have had it for years. I believe—I really believe it is the one Tom Wallace gave her just before he went away. I am sure I have seen it before.'

'Tom Wallace? The man who went to Australia and got killed in the bush?' asked Maud carelessly. 'Why, that is years and years ago, isn't it?'

Mrs Skelton nodded. 'Ten years,' she said, as the girl closed the sunshade with a smile of satisfaction. 'He was killed five years after—just before we left Southampton, you know.'

'Fancy keeping a thing locked up for ten years!' was Maud's scornful remark. 'It seems such a silly useless way of doing things. But it's in better hands now, at any rate.'

She laid it upon the table while she drew on her gloves. Then she gave a final glance to the sit of her blouse, and prepared to go.

'I shall be back by five,' she said carelessly, as she closed the door behind her. 'Tell Aunt Alice to have tea ready by then.'

But Mrs Skelton, whose self-absorption was only equalled by that of her daughter, gave no immediate thought to the girl, the tea, the borrowed sunshade, or the person whose property it was. She heard the outer door close heavily, and directly afterwards the clang of the front gate. Then she took up her volume once more.

As the gate was finally fastened, Alice Merle stepped to the window of the room above, to glance after her niece's retreating form. She watched until the girlish figure with the white sunshade had passed the corner of the street on the way to the station, and even then did not return to the millinery work with which the table was littered.

Her eyes were sad, but as patient as sad. Miss Maud was accustomed to declare that they were faded, but in reality they were only shadowed. The whole face seemed to bear the same shadow, but there was a sweetness in it which Mrs Skelton and her daughter had always mistaken for weakness.

The vision of the old white sunshade passing down the street had deepened all the shadows once more. Only once or twice had she used that gift herself since Tom Wallace had given it to her, playfully bidding her keep it until he came back. He had never come. Life had been full of hope for a time, and then had followed a strange silence. After that came a story not unusual in those days—the story of a fight in the bush, which had

ended fatally for several white men. His name had been in the list.

Then, with many other little treasures, the white sunshade had been laid away. Sometimes she had opened the box to look at it, but not often of late. Time had not changed the old affection, but it was now a pure and quiet flame which she did not care to agitate by the breath of a stormy regret.

So the last gift of Tom Wallace had lain in its folds of tissue almost undisturbed, until to-day, by all the changes. The breaking up of the home soon after that fatal news, the wandering from one town to another, the work, the anxiety, and the care—all those things had passed over and gone, and now for three years Alice Merle had been settled in the household of her elder sister. It was not a comfortable settlement, for in addition to Miss Maud there were three younger children of a second marriage. These provided busy work for the willing hands of 'Aunt Alice,' but it was all done without a whisper of complaint or a single wish for rest. Her habit was to magnify Mrs Skelton's credit and to minimise the value of her own services.

So she had lived and worked, willing by labour to soothe her troublous memories, while the old white sunshade lay in peace at the bottom of her trunk. She had never thought of taking it out again, but to-day it seemed that the need had come, for it was not her way to refuse her sister's daughter. There had been a short, sharp battle, and a painful victory; then the great box had been opened, the tissue coverings tenderly laid aside, and the heavy little sacrifice made. And now, as she watched her possession pass down the street, she wondered what Tom would say if he knew. Would he be willing?

She sat at the window until a mist came into her eyes and blotted out the pavements, the houses across the street, and even the brightness of the summer afternoon. Then she returned to her work, knowing that it was time.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, one of the visitors at Skene's Family Hotel chanced to wake from a comfortable siesta. He was a strongly-built man, apparently of middle age, and he had appropriated the most easy of all the easy chairs in the reading-room.

When he awoke he rubbed his eyes, blinked amiably, and smiled at some pleasant recollection of his dreams. But the smile was instantly succeeded by a rather regretful look, and he rose from his chair to shake himself.

'Four o'clock!' he muttered, after a glance at his watch. 'I've slept for over an hour. All that useless tramping this morning must have tired me. Hallo! what the'—

He had been gazing lazily through the window, and his exclamation was caused by something which had passed along the street before him and vanished. For a moment he thought it was a part of his dream, so startling and unexpected did it seem, and he began to rub his eyes again in great astonishment. But then, with another sharp exclamation, he rushed to the window, threw up the sash, and leaned out.

At first he could see nothing, owing to the glare of the light in his drowsy eyes. Then things became distinct, and he was enabled to

catch another glimpse of the vision which had so startled him a moment before.

He did not pause to think, or perhaps he would not have done what he did. Closing the window with a crash, he dashed into the hall, seized his hat, and hurried in pursuit, to the amazement of the porter and the discomfiture of the proprietor, who happened to meet him upon the threshold.

'Who was that, Morgan?' asked Mr Skene testily, as he paused to readjust his hat.

'Number Thirty-One, sir,' answered Morgan, the hall-porter.

'Oh—ah!' muttered Mr Skene, in a slightly mollified tone, 'he seems to be in a hurry.'

In the meantime, Number Thirty-One had passed into the next street, at the end of which stood one of the stations of the underground railway. There was quite a little crowd of people entering the iron gates, and he caught a glimpse of one white blouse in the throng.

He covered the length of that street in very good time, and found himself, a minute later, in the dim coolness of the booking-office. As he glanced about him he saw the white blouse pass through the farther doorway; but, when he tried to follow it a large official figure stood in his way.

'Ticket, sir?' said a stern voice.

The pursuer muttered something quite uncomplimentary, and turned back to where half-a-dozen men still stood waiting at the pigeon-hole. He was obliged, of course, to take his place behind them, and then suddenly remembered that he did not know what ticket to take.

Yet he was not to be daunted. The man who went before him spoke in such a low tone that only the booking-clerk could have heard his destination, but that officer named the fare in a louder voice:

'One-and-a-penny!'

Our hasty friend followed in his turn, and said without hesitation:

'Same place.'

'One-and-a-penny!' snapped the clerk.

The money was paid and the ticket pushed out. Through the gateway ran Number Thirty-One, down a flight of steps and on to the long, shadowy platform. The figure he sought was nowhere visible, but he saw that a train was just starting off.

He sprang to the nearest carriage, tore open the door, and stumbled in, impelled from behind by the vigorous hand of an indignant porter. The door was slammed hard upon his heels, and he picked himself up in triumph.

'Well caught, indeed, sir!' said an amused fellow-passenger.

'A narrow escape,' agreed Number Thirty-One, as he settled down in the corner nearest to the door. 'But—but may I ask if you saw a white—a white blouse-or-bodice-sort-of-thing get into this train?'

'A white blouse? Really I didn't notice one,' was the astonished reply. 'But in fact I was not looking at the passengers.'

'H'm—thank you,' said Number Thirty-One, rather absently, 'thank you.' And with that he put an abrupt end to the conversation by falling into a troubled reverie, which his wondering fellow-passenger did not care to disturb.

The train rolled on through the darkness,

stopping every three or four minutes to allow passengers to alight or to enter. At every stoppage, the dreamer roused himself, put his head through the window, and gazed eagerly up and down the platform. When he saw that the white blouse was not among the numbers that left the carriages, he sank back into his seat with a sigh of mingled relief and disappointment. His companion alighted at the third station, casting behind him with his cautious 'Good-afternoon' a glance of amused curiosity. Our friend replied in an absent manner, and evidently thought no more about him.

His reflections were not pleasant, for he had had time, now, to see the absurdity of his position. It could not, of course it could not, be the same. The article he thought he had recognised must have passed long ago into the forgotten. What an unsubstantial fancy he had been following, after all! Actually, he had been running after a dream!

Yet his convictions, his hopes, and his reason struggled together. Reason told him that he had acted like an eager and impulsive child. Conviction told him that his vision had been no vision, but a reality. Hope said, though faintly, that there might be some clue before him. There his natural obstinacy came to the fore, and he clenched his hands with a sudden determination to go through with the adventure at any cost. He would at least get a good view, to make sure, and then—

Another gleam of light in front, and the train came to a stand once more. He looked eagerly out, but at first in vain: then he perceived his quarry mounting the staircase which bore the familiar legend, 'Way Out.' It was a slender young girl, and she carried a white sunshade.

He hastened in pursuit, but, as his ticket bore the name of a station much farther on, he was obliged to explain things to a rather dense collector. When he reached the outer gates at last he gave an exclamation of angry dismay. She was gone!

He looked quickly round. Where in the world?

'Here y'are, sir, here y'are!' shouted a hoarse voice a little way up the street. An omnibus had just started from the station, and the conductor, glancing back, had seen a possible fare in the puzzled-looking gentleman on the kerb. At the same instant, Number Thirty-One thought he saw a trace of something white within the omnibus. He raised his hand, and the vehicle stopped.

'Full inside—plenty of room on top, sir!' cried the conductor persuasively: and, with a glance to assure himself that the white blouse was one of the nine lady passengers, the man from Skene's mounted the steps.

On rolled the omnibus, through a marvellously long road, lined with tall, gaunt houses and third-rate shops. It drew up now and again, and on these occasions our traveller leaned eagerly over the side to scan the figures of the departing passengers. But ten minutes had passed before the white blouse alighted, and tripped rapidly into a side street.

Then down from his perch came Number Thirty-One, only to find himself obstructed for another precious minute by a ponderous old lady,

who persisted in taking her own time to descend the steps. The girl was quite fifty yards away before he was free to follow, and then he saw her turn in at the gateway of a small, prim-looking villa. Her sunshade was open now.

'The same! I can swear to that lace!' said Number Thirty-One, under his breath. And a deeper flush stole into his bronzed cheeks, while his heart began to beat strangely.

Miss Skelton had reached the door, and had knocked before she heard heavy but hasty footsteps behind. They stopped at the gate, and she turned to see who was coming after her.

The man she saw was glowing with heat, and his hat was on the wrong way. But his appearance was decidedly good, while his look, half-eager and half-doubtful, was certainly nothing to be afraid of. When she turned he spoke, with his hand upon the gate; spoke quickly and nervously, and with very evident confusion:

'I beg your pardon. May I—may I ask where you got that sunshade?'

Miss Skelton almost dropped the article referred to, and her face slowly flushed the colour of the rose she wore at her belt. Of course she did not understand, but the question struck home to her conscience with most unpleasant force. But before she could speak the door opened, and Aunt Alice appeared upon the threshold in answer to her knock.

The stranger stared at her for one anxious moment. Then his face changed, and with a shout of triumph he crashed through the little gate and strode across the pathway.

'Alice!'

'Tom!' exclaimed Alice Merle, in almost the same tone. Her face changed too, for as she uttered the name the shadows passed away for ever. She made one step to meet him, and in a second more was caught and clasped and covered in the sheltering arms of Number Thirty-One.

There was no time, then, for doubt or question, no moment for hesitation or wonder. Some of these, indeed, never came, but the others found room in the telling of the stories afterwards.

Hers could be read in her patient face and in the eyes which could now look nothing but admiration. His was a record of toil and waiting, of a lingering wound and an enforced silence. Then came a time of returning, and a long search troubled by ever-recurring fears. These had been fully summed up in the words of a private inquiry agent that very morning: 'Married, sir, no doubt, and lost her identity!'

Then he spoke of this last marvellous adventure, showing how, after a disappointing and fatiguing walk, he had fallen asleep in the reading-room at Skene's, and had dreamed of her as he had seen her at their parting on Southampton Pier ten years ago, dressed in white and carrying his cherished gift: and how, waking suddenly, he had been amazed to see that self-same sunshade gliding rapidly before the window.

'What a wonderful thing!' said Alice, when all was heard. 'So you have found me by following a sunshade.'

'Which,' commanded Mr Wallace, touching the silk with reverent fingers, 'you must use on your honeymoon.'

'And after that,' whispered Aunt Alice, blush-

ing: 'It shall be laid up in lavender for ever and ever. I think it deserves it—don't you?'

So their story was told, in happiness and peace. Mrs Skelton, however, heard it with but one emotion.

'Oh dear!' she cried in dismay. 'Whatever shall we do when Alice is gone?'

'Never mind,' answered Maud, with characteristic philosophy. 'She will give me a new costume for the wedding, I suppose—at the very least!'

BRITISH OYSTERS IN ROMAN TIMES.

IN a glass case in the Pump-Room, Bath, containing relics found in the exploitation, still in progress, of the Old Roman Baths in that city, may be seen among brooches, finger-rings, bracelets, dice, lead pipes, tiles, portions of hypocausts and other débris, undoubtedly Roman—a heap of oyster-shells.

These oyster-shells, which at first sight seem out of place, mere rubbish accidentally intruded among objects of importance, are in reality of great archaeological interest; for they are leaves from a chapter of Roman history. Not only do they show us an article of the diet of those foreigners who had first conquered, and then made themselves at home among us, to the extent of building magnificent baths and villas; but they also prove that the food supply of inland stations, such as Bath, was so well regulated as to include sea-fish, not merely as a private luxury but for common use, in what we should now call a 'Restaurant' in connection with the public baths.

This is not the only instance in which oyster-shells have been found among Roman remains in Britain, they are indeed so constantly associated with them that they have come to be regarded as a certain sign that the relics with which they are found belonged to Roman times or later; hence General Pitt-Rivers, in treating of his excavations at Rushmore, says, 'Oysters are a sure indication of Roman occupation, as they appear not to have been eaten—certainly not imported—into the interior of the country before Roman times;' and he enumerates 3025 oyster-shells as having been found by him at Rushmore; in contrast with which abundance he notes that at Rotherley 'only sixteen oyster-shells were found, distributed nearly equally over the village, which may be regarded as a sign of poverty, for the people of the Roman Age regarded them as a great luxury, and took great pains to obtain them fresh.' How this freshness was maintained is a little difficult to understand when we remember that not only were oysters conveyed from the sea to all parts of Britain, distances which at that time must have occupied many days, but that they were also constantly shipped from Britain to Rome, where British oysters were so highly esteemed as to be introduced at most of the great feasts for which Rome was famous.

Juvenal thus satirises the epicure of his day who:

At the first bite each oyster's birthplace knew,
Whether a Lucrine or Circæan he'd bitten,
Or one from Rutupinian deeps in Britain.

It is a remarkable instance of continuity that the district of ancient Rutupiae, so famed for its oysters in Roman times, should still produce the most highly esteemed of those bivalves; for it was undoubtedly from the estuary of the Stour, which formerly divided the Isle of Thanet from Cantium (Kent)—a locality close to the celebrated Whitstable beds of to-day, that the Rutupinian oysters were taken. This estuary was guarded by the two great Roman castles at the places now known as Reculver and Richborough, the latter now a huge square ruin of massive ivy-covered walls, the centre converted into a great ploughed field, on the surface of which people search and not in vain, for coins, fragments of pottery, and other Roman relics, whilst everywhere the ploughshare turns up oyster-shells. Thousands of these are scattered over the surface, not all necessarily dating from Roman times, although some probably do so, for they are reduced by age and exposure to small bits of mother-of-pearl. Their presence there is at least suggestive, since it was doubtless from the port guarded by this castle, a port now filled up and far inland, that the Rutupinian oysters were shipped for Rome.

Here, too, began that great system of Roman roads carried by the conquerors all over Britain, by means of which excellent roads oysters and other fish, as well as imports of various kinds from Gaul and Italy, were distributed to those inland stations where their relics are now found. Although other ports and estuaries produced their quota of oysters, there is evidence that the finer Rutupinian natives were conveyed all over Britain, forming the luxury of the rich, whilst poorer folk had to content themselves with coarser varieties from less distant parts. In the catalogue of relics found in the Roman villa at Chedworth, Gloucestershire, it is observed that most of the oyster-shells found belong to the coarser or 'Mumble' oyster from the estuary of the Severn, but occasional shells of 'natives' occur; whilst at Corinium (Cirencester), in the same county, it is just the reverse, the 'natives' being common and the larger sorts rare.

Doubtless the rich gourmands of those days contrived to have relays of their favourite delicacy conveyed to them by special messengers, at which we need not marvel, since it is related of Lucullus that he had a canal cut through a mountain near Naples in order that his villa might be supplied with fresh fish.

But the long and dangerous journey, whether by land or sea, between Rome and Britain must always have occupied a considerable and uncertain time; and by what means the supply of British oysters was kept up is a mystery which some searcher into the curious facts of ancient history would do well to unravel, especially just now, when the delicious bivalve, which for so many centuries has given pleasure to the epicure and health to the invalid, has

fallen into disrepute as the purveyor of disease and death.

Doctors have apparently traced many cases of typhoid fever to the consumption of oysters. It is hard to imagine disease in connection with the innocent pearly shell which forms the home of our favourite bivalve; but it is not the first time such an allegation has been brought against it. We remember that the illness of the Duke of York some years ago was attributed to his having partaken of oysters from the mouth of the Liffey, and typhoid is often said to result from oysters eaten in Naples. It is easy to understand that where the waters are contaminated with sewage, the oysters should absorb and perhaps retain deleterious matter. But oyster merchants affirm that they will not thrive in such water, and that the oyster beds are so situated that they receive the freshest and purest of water from the North Seas. And so the blame is thrown upon the staleness of the fish, which, as one writer says, are often not 'natives' at all, but brought 'from the Brittany coast, from Arcachon, from the Scheldt, from Marennes, and even from America, a week, and sometimes much longer, being taken up from the time of packing to their arrival in the London market. Then the oysters which are not sold at once will be put back into the fishmonger's cellars; also the purchasers of a barrel will sometimes keep some for a day or two in their own cellars, and the condiments of pepper and vinegar will conceal from the inquisitive palate the warning flavour of unwholesome staleness.' When, however, we think of British oysters in Rome in the days of Cæsar, we cannot fail to see that the purveyors of that early time must have exercised more care and skill than those of the present day, for the voyage must have taken more time than that from America to England now. How long on an average we cannot say, but Cicero writing from Italy to his brother Quintus says:

'From Britain, Cæsar wrote to me on the kalends of September, and I received his letter the fourth day before the kalends of October;' and again, 'When I was folding this letter, carriers came from you on the eleventh day before the kalends of September, after being twenty days on their journey.' Thus we see that the letters sent by special messengers took about twenty days in transit; but oysters, being heavy carriage, must have taken much longer even by special messenger overland, and by coasting-vessel longer still; therefore some artificial means for keeping them alive must have been adopted or they would not have been eatable when they reached the Roman market. A simple mode of doing this suggests itself—namely, the packing them in wicker baskets and lowering them into the sea for a short time daily. It is certain that oysters will live and thrive for a considerable time if supplied with fresh sea-water, and it must be gross neglect to allow them to become dead and stale in a few days. We remember in the palmy days when a barrel of oysters formed a common Christmas gift, that immediately upon arrival the barrel was opened, the oysters placed in shallow milk pans, and covered, in the absence of sea-water, with fresh salt and water, upon

which a little oatmeal was scattered, to be renewed daily, with some hours of dryness between; and under this treatment they thrive and grew fat, and the end of the barrel was as good as the beginning, or better.

Surely in this nineteenth century of scientific progress we are not to be beaten in matters of common utility by men of the first. If the Romans could convey British oysters in an eatable condition to Rome, why should we be obliged to eat those which are stale or unwholesome from the absorption of sewage matter? There are great banks of delicious oysters lying on the coasts of many of our colonies, notably on the east coast of South Africa, and it seems a pity that some means is not devised for bringing these over and introducing them to the English market. At present, we are told, 'it is impossible,' but that which is impossible one year is often found to be both possible and profitable the next; and certainly anything which will add to the wholesome food-supply of our immense population is worthy the attention of our scientific men.

WITCHERY.

I LOOKED upon you, and my soul was stirred
As if by some rich music. Round about
The ceaseless din of tinsel tongues was heard,
And empty shout.

I looked upon you—and a strangeness crept
Around my heart and gripped it in sweet pain:
A thousand yearnings, long forgotten, leapt
To life again.

Like bonds of sleep I seemed to throw aside
The burden of the present, and to see
With youth's clear vision stretching broad and wide
Futurity.

The olden sense of wonder shook my soul,
I caught the rhythm and the throb of life;
Through all the world I heard the music roll
Of splendid strife!

What wrought the spell? No consciousness of power
Shone in the steadfast beauty of your eyes:
Tender and sweet were they, like some wild flower
Loved of warm skies.

Nor spoke your lips, soft-prest like roses wed—
Just human seemed you, hinting naught sublime;
Yet, whence your power to re-create the dead,
The slain of time?

I looked upon you—'Mid the dusky horde
You scintillated like an Eastern gem,
And O your beauty smote them like a sword
Lifted to them!

Sweet sorceress, if pity be in you,
Be chary of your charms for pity's sake;
For O it breaks the broken heart anew
To dream—and wake!

EDGAR DEWEY.

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STRAY MEETINGS OF LIFE.

By E. MAXWELL.

FANNY KEMBLE—EMPEROR FREDERICK—CARDINAL MANNING.

As one looks back over a period of ten or twelve years on the people who have crossed one's path in that time, what a strangely confused mass of images appears! Some are of absorbing interest, others very much the reverse, but all alike, from sheer force of numbers, are blurred and indistinct. To-night, some of these passing figures have disentangled themselves from the crowd and become clear and vivid. Let me try to photograph them—it will only be a snapshot—before they fade into the mists again.

First I see a small and somewhat fierce old lady of a wonderfully dignified presence. The scene is a mountain hotel, high in the Alps; I can hear the waterfall behind it now, and the tinkling of the cow-bells, and distinctly remember my fright on being presented to the aforesaid old lady by the kind hostess with whom both she and I were staying, in these words: 'Mrs Kemble, this young woman is a great friend of mine.'

A pair of piercing eyes scanned my face, and there was a terrible pause before a deep tragic voice made the embarrassing reply: 'Is she a good young woman?'

It was somewhat difficult to call up the right expression at such short notice, but I looked as good as I could, and something else fortunately distracting her attention, my morals were not further gone into on that occasion.

There was something regal, something of the stage queen in Fanny Kemble's appearance, and her entrance into the *table d'hôte* room of an evening night, from its ceremonious dignity, have been that of a sovereign into the throne-room. How she terrified us all, and how she snubbed us all in turn, especially the old gentlemen of the party, until not one of them could be got to sit next her at table! She hated all men, we were told, for the sake of the husband she

had separated from long ago; any of the small courtesies of society offered by them were resented as insults; and well do I recollect one of the most courteous of men saying to her one night at dinner: 'Do you think, Mrs Kemble, that we could get up a rubber of whist this evening?' and her cutting reply across the table: 'I don't know if *you* can; I can't!'

She had a great fancy for bilberries, and complained that we young people never thought it worth while to bring in any fruit except Alpine strawberries; so my brother and I, wishing to give the old lady a treat, gathered a great basketful and presented them to her; unfortunately she was not in a good mood that day, and we were well snubbed for our pains. Poor Fanny Kemble! the troubles of life had embittered her, but there was much that was lovable when she let her better nature have play, and I can recall unexpected softness at parting which gave a glimpse of the kind feeling within. She may have been pretty as a young woman, but there was no trace of beauty when I met her, though the remains of considerable grace of manner and gesture.

And now the scene changes, and it is Venice, with its silver-smitten waters, that forms a background to a kingly figure; that of the Emperor Frederick of Germany. Tall, fair, erect, noble in look and bearing, undaunted by the disease that was even then preying upon him, full of consideration for others, what a lasting ideal he has been to those who, like myself, were admitted, for however short a time, to intercourse with him!

The first occasion of our meeting was at an informal after-dinner reception, to which I went with my uncle, at a beautiful house on the Grand Canal, famed alike for its hospitality and its treasures of art. The Crown Prince (as he then was) and some other gentlemen were smoking in the balcony when we arrived, and after paying his respects to the lady of the house, my uncle, irresistibly drawn by the fumes of tobacco, wandered out there through the open window; on perceiving the presence of royalty, he was beating

a hasty retreat, when the Crown Prince, seeing a stranger, jumping up, stopped him, and laying a friendly hand on his shoulder, asked: 'Did you think you smelt something?' 'Yes sir,' said my uncle promptly, 'I did. I thought I smelt something burning!' The prince laughed heartily, and offered him his cigar-case, drew him out, without further ceremony, to the balcony, where they all spent a very pleasant evening.

A few days after, the Crown Prince and Princess, with their daughters, came to tea at the same house, and the hostess being engaged in entertaining them, asked me to make tea for her; she handed me the tea-caddy, but unfortunately forgot to mention that it was filled with a very strong and pungent Indian tea, of which only a very small quantity should be used. I made it in the usual way; the result was a bitter decoction, which no one could drink, and great was my dismay, when one member of the party after another laid their cups down after one sip, or brought them to be filled up with boiling water, while I wondered what on earth had gone wrong.

However, there was *one* member of the party who found no fault with his, literally, bitter cup, but swallowed it gallantly down, and even asked for a second; then, turning to the lady of the house, made us all happy again by asking: 'Lady —, where do you get your tea? That is the best cup of tea I ever drank in my life.'

Was that kind and courteous prince fibbing? If so, I do not think it could have been laid very heavily to his account. Then coming to the table, he himself waited on the luckless tea-maker, playfully recommending the best-buttered pieces of cake, and effectually routing any remaining discomfiture by his kindness.

After tea, an Italian nobleman of fallen fortunes, who wished to give music lessons, played to us, and, wishing to pay his royal hearers a compliment, introduced 'God save the Queen' with variations, into one of his pieces. Every one rose except the Crown Prince, who did not recognise the air, which certainly was very much disguised, and asked why we were all standing up. Another piece was Chopin's 'Berceuse,' which he said reminded him of the motion of the gondola, rocking himself from side to side to illustrate his meaning as he spoke; the simile has always come back to me since, when I hear that graceful swaying music, and recalled that sunset hour in the City of the Doges. Other great men were present, giants in the world of literature, art, and travel, the lion-hearted Layard with the halo of his great discoveries on his brow, and Browning with his poet's wreath of laurel, but all seemed but to form a background for that noble presence.

A very different figure next occupies the foreground of my mental vision: red-capped, thin, ascetic, hook-nosed, with piercing eyes and a commanding presence, impressing one strangely

with a sense of indomitable will-power. One always felt with Cardinal Manning, not only that he ruled the minds of others, but that his own reasoning powers, which were great, were sternly brought into subjection to his will, and not allowed to act in opposition to it; it was the strain of mental warfare that struck one in him rather than the peace of spiritual victory.

I first met him at the house of a fox-hunting squire in one of the eastern counties; a convent church in the neighbourhood had been burned down some time before, and had been recently restored, and the cardinal had come down to reopen it with a goodly following of ecclesiastics in his train, staying for the occasion in the heretic big house of the district. The mother of the host was a convert to the Church of Rome, and great preparations had been made to give his Eminence a fitting reception; a select company of co-religionists had been invited to meet him, and a corner of the library had been transformed into a temporary chapel for his private devotions, with prie-dieu chair, rosary, and table with cross, and candle-sticks, and flowers to serve as altar. We watched these preparations with much awe and interest. My qualification to be present on the occasion was the fact that I had recently returned from attending the papal jubilee in Rome, and was therefore supposed to be well suited for priestly society.

The cardinal was most urbane, and bestowed an indulgent smile and an impartial blessing on us all, even on us heretics who did not bend to kiss his episcopal ring—a pretty ceremony, which I have always regretted my religious principles did not permit me to take part in. His manner was a charming mixture of benevolence and dignity; and however little one might agree with his views, he was a man whom, personally, it was impossible not to venerate.

At dinner he ate little or nothing, dismissing one dish after another, with a wave of a long slender hand, which looked as emaciated as the rest of him. His clergy were not so abstemious, but partook more freely of the good things spread before them, and at dessert, after the ladies had left the table, one of them drew down a stern reproof upon his head. A handsome snuff-box was being handed round in accordance with an old-fashioned custom, and the luckless priest in question, having taken a good pinch from it between his finger and thumb, was just approaching it with much enjoyment to his nose, when an uplifted hand at the end of the table checked him, while a voice of thunder uttered the words, 'I forbid!' Down went the pinch of snuff as if it had been red-hot, and the strangers present found it difficult to sympathise sufficiently with the poor priest's discomfiture. The ceremony of the following day was most impressive, and the cardinal's sermon was a masterpiece of moderation, admirably adapted to avoid offending his Protestant hearers: the con-

vent was *en fête*, and the nuns entertained us all at a sumptuous luncheon, after which the illustrious guest and his party left for London.

Our next meeting was at the Archbishop's palace at Westminster, where, from that time forth, I always found a kind and cordial welcome. We talked of Rome, and the cardinal expressed his grief that he would never see it again, saying that the disease he suffered from, old age, was incurable. He called my attention to a picture on the wall, representing, I think, a celebration of mass at St Peter's at Rome, remarking that it was unfinished; I assented, and he asked how I knew it? On pointing out some obviously incomplete details, he bade me look at the altar, but at first my unorthodox eyes could see nothing wrong, until he showed me that the candles on the altar were not lighted.

By his wish we went round his chapel and collection of relics with an old servant of his, who would not spare us a single bone, though not always quite sure which saint it belonged to; on these occasions he would hazard a name and add in parenthesis, 'Or some other holy saint.' He reminded me of a clergyman I once heard preach, who, after giving a touching and somewhat lengthy account of the conversion of the children of Lydia, the seller of purple, added, 'If children she had!'

My later meetings with the cardinal, though always friendly, were not so peaceful, for we entered on the battlefield of controversy, and both by book and discussion he strove hard to win a convert. It was hardly a fair contest, as respect for his gray hairs and sacred office often prevented one from refuting arguments which seemed obviously false or unsound. All means to gain a point were fair in his eyes, and he was an adept in the art of entrapping the unwary into admissions little dreamt of. His line of argument would be as follows: 'You admit that salvation is possible to members of the Church of Rome. Now there are not two ways to heaven, and we believe that no one outside our Church can be saved; therefore, for your soul's safety, you had better join us, as, by your own admission, it cannot hurt you to do so.' I could quote other instances, but they are hardly suited for the pages of any but a church paper.

Only on one occasion did I draw down his wrath on myself; it was just after the dock strike in which the cardinal had taken so prominent a part in supporting the strikers, and he was inveighing against Martin Luther as the enemy of all law and order, and wound up by declaring that the French Revolution was the direct outcome of his pernicious teaching.

'In that case,' I said, 'you would say the same of any great socialist movement or reform; you would hold him responsible for the recent dock strike, for instance?'

There was a lightning flash from his eyes, and for a moment he looked like an angry hawk, but controlling himself instantly, he replied coldly that they were not parallel cases, and I had not courage to pursue the subject further.

Peace be to his ashes! He was a true friend and a worthy antagonist, and the very points on which we differed only gave additional interest to our meetings. As his figure recedes into the

mists of the past, that striking personality still dominates my brain; everything else looks faint and indistinct beside it, and for the time being, at all events, no other can take its place.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER III.—A CHANCE LOST.

It was the pink of the evening when the cousins drove off in a four-wheeler with the cats on top. Claude had been in many minds about their destination, until the Duke had asked him to recommend an hotel. At that he had hesitated a little, and finally pitched upon the First Avenue. A variety of feelings guided his choice, chief among them being a vague impression that his wild kinsman would provoke less attention in Holborn than in Northumberland Avenue. To Holborn, at all events, they were now on their way.

Claude sat far back in the cab; he felt thankful it was not a hansom. In the Mall they met a string of them, taking cloaked women and white-breasted men out to dinner. Claude saw one or two faces he knew, but was himself unseen. He saw them stare and smile at the tanned and bearded visage beneath that villainous wideawake, which was thrust from one window to the other with the eager and unrestrained excitement of a child. He felt ashamed of poor Jack. He was sincerely ashamed of this very feeling.

'What streets!' whispered the Duke in an awestruck voice. 'We've nothing like 'em in Melbourne. They'd knock spots off Sydney. I've been in both.'

Claude had a sudden thought. 'For you,' he said, 'these streets should have a special interest.'

'How's that?'

'Well, many of them belong to you.'

'WHAT?'

'You are the ground-landlord of some of the streets and squares we have already passed.'

The brown beard had fallen in dismay; now, however, a mouthful of good teeth showed themselves in a frankly incredulous grin.

'What are you givin' us?' laughed Jack. 'I see, you think you've got a lean of a new chum! Well, so you have. Go ahead!'

'Not if you don't choose to believe me,' replied Claude stiffly. 'I meant what I said; I usually do. The property has been in our family for hundreds of years.'

'And now it's mine?'

'And now it's yours.'

The Duke of St Osmund's took off his monstrous wideawake, and passed the back of his hairy hand across his forehead. The gesture was eloquent of a mind appalled.

'Have I no homestead on my own run?' he inquired at length.

'You have several,' said Claude, smiling; but he also hesitated.

'Several in London?' cried the Duke, aghast again.

'No, only one in town.'

'That's better! I say, though, why aren't we going there?'

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'Well, the fact is, they're not quite ready for you; I mean the servants. They—we were all rather rushed, you know, and they don't expect you to-night. Do you mind?'

Claude had stated but one fact of many. That morning, when he stopped his hansom at the house, he had told the servants not to expect his Grace until he telegraphed. After seeing the Duke, he had resolved not to telegraph at all; and certainly not to install him in his own house, as he was, without consulting other members of the family. He still considered that decision justified. Nevertheless, the Duke's reply came as a great relief.

'No; I'm just as glad,' said Jack contentedly. His contentment was only comparative, however. The first dim conception of his greatness had strangely dashed him; he was no longer the man that he had been in the train.

An athlete, in a frayed frock-coat, and no shirt, was sprinting behind the cab with the customary intent; it was a glimpse of him, as they turned a corner, that slew the oppressed Duke, and brought Happy Jack back to life.

'Stop the cab!' he roared; 'there's a man on the track of my cats!'

'Nonsense, my dear fellow; it's only a person who'll want sixpence for not helping with the luggage.'

'Are you sure?' cried Jack suspiciously. 'How do you know he isn't a professional cat-stealer? I must ask the cabman if they are all right!' He did so, and was reassured.

'We're almost at the hotel now,' said Claude, with misgivings; he was bitterly anticipating the sensation to be caused there by the arrival of such a Duke of St Osmund's, and wondering whether it would be of any use suggesting a further period of *incognito*.

'Nearly there, are we? Then look here,' said Jack, 'I've got something to insist on. I mean to have my way about one matter.'

Claude groaned inwardly.

'What is it?' he asked.

'I'll tell you straight; I'm not going to do the Duke in this hotel. I'm plain Jack Dillamore, or I don't go in.'

The delight of this deliverance nearly overcame the poet.

'I think you're wise,' was all he trusted himself to say. 'I should be inclined to take the same course were I in your place. You will escape a great deal of the sort of adulation which turneth the soul sick. And for one night, at all events, you will be able, as an alien outsider, to form an unprejudiced opinion of our unlovely metropolis!'

In the bright light of his ineffable relief, Claude's little mannerisms stood out once more, like shadows when the sun shines fitfully; but it was a transient gleam. The arrival at the hotel was still embarrassing enough. The wideawake attracted attention; the attention was neither of a flattering character in itself nor otherwise desirable from any point of view. It made Claude miserable; there was also trouble about the cats.

Jack insisted on having them with him in his room. The management demurred. Jack threatened to go elsewhere. The management raised no objection; but Claude did; he handed them his card, and this settled the matter. There is but one family of Lafonts in England. So Jack

had his way. A room was taken; the cats were put into it, milk was set before them, and Jack left the hotel in Claude's company, with the key of the room in his pocket.

Claude would have taken him to his club, but for both their sakes he did not dare. Yet he was as anxious as ever to show every hospitality to the Duke. So he had refused Jack's invitation to dine with him in the hotel, and was taking him across to the Holborn instead.

The dinner went wonderfully. Jack was delighted with the music, with the electric lights, with the marble pillars, with the gilded balconies, with the dinner itself, in fact with everything. There was but one item which did not appeal to him. He stoutly refused to drink a drop of wine.

'A promise is a promise,' said he. 'I gave you my colonial in the train, and I mean to keep it; for a bit, at all events.'

Claude protested and tempted him in vain. Jack called for a lemon-squash, and turned his wine-glasses upside down. He revenged himself, however, upon the viands.

'Which *entrée*, please, sir?' said the waiter.

'Both!' cried Jack; 'you may go on, mister, till I tell you to stop!'

After dinner the cousins went aloft, and Claude took out his cigarette case and ordered cigars for the Duke. He could not smoke them himself, but neither, it appeared, could Jack. He produced a cutty-pipe, black and foul with age, and a cake of tobacco like a piece of shoe-leather, which he began paring with his knife. Claude had soon to sit farther away from him.

Jack did not fancy a theatre; he was strongly in favour of a quiet evening and a long talk; and it was he who proposed that they should return, for this purpose, to the First Avenue. No sooner were they comfortably settled in the hotel smoking-room, however, than the Duke announced that he must run upstairs and see to his cats. And he came down no more that night.

Claude waited patiently for twenty minutes. Then he began a note to Lady Caroline Sellwood. Then he remembered that he could, if he liked, see Lady Caroline that night. It was merely a question of driving over to his rooms in St James's and putting himself into evening dress. On the whole, this seemed worth doing. Claude therefore followed Jack upstairs after an interval of half-an-hour.

The Duke's room was on the first floor. Claude surprised a group of first-floor servants laughing and whispering in the corridor. The little that he heard as he passed made him hot all over. The exact words were:

'Never see such a man in my life.' 'Nor me, my dear!'

'An' yet they call this 'ere a decent 'otel!'

Claude had no doubt in his own mind as to whom they were talking about. Already the Duke inspired him with a sort of second-self-consciousness. Prepared for anything, he hastened to the room and nervously knocked at the door.

'Come in!' cried Jack's voice.

The door was unlocked; as Claude opened it the heat of the room fairly staggered him. It was a warm summer night already; yet an enormous fire was burning in the grate.

'My dear fellow!' panted Claude.

Jack was in his trousers and shirt; the sleeves

were rolled up over his brawny arms; the open front revealed an estuary of hairy chest (duly tattooed as alleged); and it was plain at a glance that the Duke was perspiring at every pore.

'It's all right,' he said. 'It's for the cats.'

'The cats!' said Claude. They were lying round about the fire.

'Yes, poor devils! They had a fire every day in the hut, summer and winter. They never had a single one at sea. They like to sleep by it—they always did—all but Livingstone. He sleeps with me when he isn't on the loose.'

'But you'll never be able to sleep in an atmosphere like this!'

Jack was cutting up a pipeful of his black tobacco.

'Well, it is warm,' he admitted. 'And now you mention it, I may find it a job to get asleep; but the cats like it, anyhow!' And he swore affectionately at them as he lit his pipe.

'Did you forget you'd left me downstairs?' asked Claude.

'Clean! I apologise. I took this idea into my head, and I could think of nothing else.'

'May we have another window open? Thank you. I'll smoke one cigarette; then I must be off.'

'Where to?'

'My chambers—to dress.'

'To undress you mean!'

'No, to dress. I've got to go out to a—to a party. I had almost forgotten about it. The truth is, I want to see Lady Caroline Sellwood, who, although not a near relation, is about the only woman in London with our blood in her veins. She will want to see you. What's the matter?'

Jack's pipe had gone out in his hand; and there he stood, a mere pillar of perspiring bewilderment.

'A party!' he murmured. 'At this time o' night!'

Claude laughed.

'It's not ten o'clock yet; if I'm there before half-past eleven I shall be too early.'

'I give you best,' said Jack, shaking his head, and putting another light to his pipe. 'It licks me! Who's the madman who gives parties in the middle of the night?'

'My dear fellow, everybody does! In this case it's a woman: the Countess of Darlingford.'

'A live Countess!'

'Well, but you're a live Duke.'

'But—I'm—a live—Dook!'

Jack repeated the words as though the fact had momentarily escaped him. His pipe went out again. This time he made no attempt to relight it, but stood staring at Claude with his bare brown arms akimbo, and much trouble in his rugged, honest face.

'You can't get out of it,' laughed Claude.

'I can!' he cried. 'I mean to get out of it! I'm not the man for the billet. I wasn't dragged up to it. And I don't want it! I shall only make a darned ass of myself and everybody else mixed up with me. I may be the man by birth, but I'm not the man by anything else; and look here! I want to back out of it while there's time; and you're the very man to help me! I wasn't dragged up to it—but you were. I'm not the man for the billet—but you are. The very man! You go to parties in the middle of

the night, and you think nothing of 'em. They'd be the death of Happy Jack! The whole thing turns me sick with funk—the life, the money, the responsibility. I never got a sight of it till to-day; and now I don't want it at any price. You'd have got it if it hadn't been for me; so take it now—for heaven's sake, take it now! If it's mine, it's mine to give. I give it to you! Claude, old toucher, be the Dook yourself. Let me and the cats clear back to the bush!'

The poet had listened, with amazement, with amusement, with compassion and concern. He now shook his head.

'You ask an impossibility. Without going into the thing, take my word for it that what you propose is utterly and hopelessly out of the question.'

'Couldn't I disappear?' said Jack eagerly. 'Couldn't I do a bolt in the night? It's a big chance for you; surely you won't lose it by refusing to help me out of it?'

Claude again shook his head.

'In a week's time you will be laughing at what you are saying now. You are one of the richest men in England; everything that money can buy you can have. You own some of the loveliest seats in the whole country; wait till I have shown you Maske Towers! You won't want to get out of it then. You won't ask me to be the Duke again!'

He had purposely dwelt upon those material allurements which the bushman's mind would most readily grasp. And it was obvious that his arguments had hit the target, although not, perhaps, the bull's-eye.

'Anyhow,' said Jack doggedly, 'it's an offer! And I repeat it. What's more, I mean it too!'

'Then I decline it,' returned Claude, humouring him; 'and there's an end of the matter. Look here, though. One thing I promise. If you like I'll see you through!'

'You will?'

'I will with all my heart.'

'And you're quite sure you won't take on the whole show yourself?'

'Quite sure,' said Claude, smiling.

'Still, you'll tell me what to do? You'll tell me what not to do? You'll show me the ropes? You'll have hold of my sleeve?'

'I'll do all that; at least, I'll do all I can. It may not be much. Still I'll do it.'

Jack held out a hot, damp hand; yet, just then, he seemed to be perspiring most freely under the eyes.

'You're a good sort, Claudy!' said he hoarsely.

'Good-night, old fellow,' said Claude Lafont.

CORDITE.

It may be stated of every period of history that the arts of peace and war have been developed side by side; and the present era probably exemplifies this truth more forcibly than any other. During this century the magic wand of science has brought new industries into life, and by its touch has improved others almost out of recognition. Similarly, every weapon and material of warfare has undergone a parallel improvement; new machines have been invented, and new explosives discovered, resulting in war becoming a conflict of science against science, rather than man against man.

The inception of the idea of a 'smokeless' powder, of which cordite is the best representative up to the present, was due to the discovery of gun-cotton by Schönbein in 1846. This chemist found that when cotton-wool or other cotton fabrics were treated with a mixture of strong nitric and sulphuric acids, a body was produced possessing great explosive power, and in addition burned with a smokeless flame. This discovery immediately suggested the possibility of an explosive being produced, suitable for use in a gun, which, on burning, should give rise to no smoke to obscure the field of action; and nearly every country in Europe took steps to manufacture the new explosive with a view to utilising it for war purposes. Unfortunately, owing to an imperfect knowledge of the substance, several terrible explosions, attended with loss of life, took place in this country and abroad, the result of which was that the manufacture of gun-cotton was abandoned for some years. It was not until 1863 that Sir F. Abel successfully overcame the difficulties connected with its manufacture, and devised a process by which it could be prepared with perfect safety. A number of experiments were then conducted at Woolwich with a view to using gun-cotton as a substitute for gunpowder; but, so rapid was the rate of burning, that the firing chambers of the guns were shattered by the sudden shock. The idea of using it for this purpose was therefore abandoned; and the matter of a smokeless powder remained in abeyance for another twenty years. The only known method by which the rate of burning of gun-cotton could be slackened was by the addition of mineral matter; and as this invariably gives rise to smoke, the mixture would possess no advantages over ordinary gunpowder.

About the time Sir F. Abel commenced his experiments with gun-cotton, Mr Alfred Nobel, a Swedish engineer, began the manufacture of nitro-glycerine on a large scale for blasting purposes. This extremely powerful and sensitive explosive was discovered as far back as 1847, but had not been pressed into service owing to its dangerous character. In 1867 Mr Nobel produced dynamite, which is merely nitro-glycerine soaked up in a porous earth, the product then being safe to handle. Having thus proved that nitro-glycerine could be made serviceable for explosive purposes, Mr Nobel continued his researches, and discovered the extraordinary fact that if *soluble* gun-cotton were used to soak up the nitro-glycerine instead of a porous earth, a horny substance of great explosive power was produced, which burned slowly with a smokeless flame. Our present service explosive, cordite, is the result of an extension of Mr Nobel's experiments, with the difference that *insoluble* gun-cotton is used instead of soluble. Cordite in reality consists of a mixture of nitro-glycerine, 'insoluble' gun-cotton, and vaseline, in certain proportions; and although containing two such violent ingredients, is not only perfectly safe to handle, but is in every respect a good explosive for military purposes.

Before attempting to explain why cordite, in spite of its composition, burns slowly, it

will be well to describe briefly its manufacture as conducted in the Government Factory at Waltham Abbey. Dry gun-cotton, in the form of blocks, is weighed out into brass-lined wooden boxes, twenty-seven and three-quarter pounds being placed in each box. To each charge of gun-cotton forty-three and a-half pounds of nitro-glycerine, weighed out in gutta-percha jugs, are added, and the gun-cotton rubbed up by hand into the nitro-glycerine. The mixture—called 'cordite-paste'—is then transferred to a machine, exactly similar to those employed for kneading dough. Fifteen pounds ten ounces of acetone are now added, and the mixture incorporated for three and a-half hours. Acetone is a liquid possessing the useful property of dissolving both the nitro-glycerine and gun-cotton, which therefore become far more perfectly mixed than would be the case if no solvent were used. The mixed solution is of the consistency of dough, and entangles the acetone, which, however, is entirely removed by the processes described later. Vaseline to the amount of three and a-half pounds is then added, and the machine worked for another three and a-half hours. At the end of this time the incorporation is complete, and the cordite 'dough' is removed and taken to the press-house. It is here placed in a cylinder fitted with a piston, the bottom of the cylinder having a hole through its centre, of the same diameter as the finished cordite. Hydraulic pressure is then applied to the piston, and a string or cord of the substance issues, and is wound on a drum. It is owing to the form thus assumed that the name 'cordite' has been applied to this explosive. One pound of 'dough' is pressed into a string two thousand feet long, and is received on a single reel. The reels are then taken to the drying-stove, where the acetone not removed in the pressing is entirely evaporated. The reels are then taken to the cutting-machine, and the cordite cut into lengths according to requirements, after which the pieces are taken to the storehouse and are ready for use.

The product of this process is a remarkable body, and is a tribute to the patience and skill of its inventors. Although composed of such dangerous ingredients, it may be handled with perfect safety, and may be carried about in the pocket without danger. If a piece be lighted in a flame, it burns slowly with a yellow, smokeless flame; and so gentle is the combustion that it may be extinguished with the breath. Yet the gases generated by the burning occupy a volume one thousand times as great as that of the original cordite; and in consequence the pressure exerted on burning it in a confined space is remarkably great. Such is the culmination of nineteenth century explosives.

In order to explain the slow-burning character of cordite, it is only necessary to consider some every-day facts of chemistry. It is well-known that what is called a 'compound,' differs entirely in properties from the bodies composing it. Sodium, for instance, is an extremely active substance, and burns even when thrown upon water. Chlorine is likewise very active; yet when sodium and chlorine unite together, they

produce chloride of sodium, or common salt, which is an extremely inert substance. Here then is one reason why cordite is relatively so inert; the two active constituents, gun-cotton and nitro-glycerine, combine to form a compound possessing properties different from either. It is the acetone which brings about this combination, without itself undergoing any change.

There is, however, another factor at work which materially lessens the rate of burning. Not only do these bodies combine, but the resulting compound is of such a character that the separate particles are extremely close together; so close, indeed, that the product cannot be permeated even by gases. It resembles celluloid in this respect; there is a total absence of porosity. When the body commences to burn, therefore, the hot gases produced cannot permeate the whole mass, and set up a general combustion, as in the case of gunpowder; the burning must proceed layer by layer. We thus see the reason for the apparently paradoxical result that two rapidly-burning explosives produce by their union a safe and slow-burning substance.

The chief function of the vaseline is to render the material more pliable, and, therefore, more easily worked. Being itself an inert substance, it also serves to some extent to regulate the rate of burning. By facilitating the mixing, the vaseline insures the production of a perfectly uniform body, a property absolutely necessary for a reliable explosive.

Cordite possesses many advantages over ordinary gunpowder. A charge of one pound of cordite in a gun will propel a projectile as far as five pounds of the best gunpowder; and consequently a field gun or rifle will attain a much greater range if an equal weight of cordite be substituted for the gunpowder. The advantage possessed in the matter of range by the new Lee-Metford rifle, constructed specially for cordite cartridges, over the Martini, is entirely due to the superior explosive power of the cordite. In addition to this advantage, there is neither smoke nor fouling produced when cordite is employed. The fouling, caused by the deposit of potash salts from gunpowder, entails considerable labour to effect its removal; this is entirely obviated by the use of cordite. Neither does it suffer by comparison with gunpowder in respect to stability or safety of transport. Specimens which had formed part of the stores in the recent Chitral campaign, and which had been subjected to great variations of temperature and much rough usage, were found, on examination, to be absolutely unchanged in every respect. No moisture had been absorbed, neither could the slightest alteration in explosive power or chemical properties be detected. Cordite is undoubtedly a reliable and powerful explosive, and will in all probability entirely supplant gunpowder as a propelling agent for military purposes.

There is one drawback to the use of cordite, however, which has rendered its adoption in the navy impracticable up to the present. It decomposes at a much lower temperature than gunpowder, and in the magazines of a warship, which from their situation frequently attain a high temperature from the heat of the boilers,

cordite could not be stored with absolute safety. Probably some arrangement for keeping the magazines perfectly cool will ultimately be devised, and thus render cordite available for naval service. Another slight objection to cordite is that nitric fumes are produced in the burning, which have a tendency to corrode the interior of the gun. The inconvenience suffered on this account, however, is very slight compared with the fouling produced by gunpowder.

Cordite, therefore, though not a perfect explosive, is a great step in advance of the older explosives of the type of gunpowder. Its propelling power—and hence its destructive power—being much greater, it is therefore a far more valuable war material; and the fact that it yields no smoke is an important factor in facilitating military operations. When it, or some similar substitute, is universally used, the future writer will still be able to refer to the 'din of battle;' but the 'battle-smoke' will be a thing of the past.

A CHILD OF TONKING.

CHAPTER II.

THE night following the day of Long Jean's punishment was a dark one. The moon did not rise until nearly midnight, and from eight till twelve it chanced that the Black Rat was on sentry duty in the *lookout* box placed upon the eastern wall of the fort. So still was the night that at times he could distinctly hear the splashing of the wild-fowl in the river at the bottom of the valley, and the sound of snoring from the great whitewashed *Chambrée* across the square. The men were tired after their day's enforced idleness, and, as in their sleep they were able for a brief space to forget their unenviable lives, there were few who did not wish to make the most of it.

To Black Rat, leaning upon his rifle, and looking across the dark gulf before him, the world, strangely enough, presented a face of romance. Formidable as was the character he bore in the regiment, hard as his life had proved, constant as his changes in place and scene had necessarily been, he had yet found time to cherish an ideal. That the woman in question, a silk worker in a factory at Lyons, had never bestowed two thoughts upon him, but had married a flourishing baker in the *Rue de Marguerite*, was beside the mark. He had danced with her on two occasions, had been her escort on a never-to-be-forgotten *fête-day*, and had been arrested twenty-four hours later, for a Parisian burglary, and had been sent out of France at the country's expense within the month. Small as the justification was, his heart must have been badly seared, for he retained the image of the pretty Marie throughout his exile, and when, on returning to France five years later, he learned that she had married and found her grave in the cemetery of Montmartre, his sorrow was as keen as if they had been betrothed and he had lost her on the eve of the wedding-day. That afternoon he enlisted in the Foreign Legion with the air of a man whose heart had known a life-long sorrow, and after a brief wait, was ordered to Tonking.

In the regiment his character was a complete contradiction. During the day he would be the semi-mutinuous, always ferocious, ex-convict soldier of France; when alone in his cups, or standing sentry, as on the present occasion, his thoughts would take an entirely different turn, and he would picture himself the husband of Marie, with a small but prosperous shop in the neighbourhood of Lyons, a family to correspond, a comfortable bag of savings hidden under the hearthstone, and a neat black coat for use when he and his wife took their pleasure, and went abroad on high days and holidays. When he awoke from his dream and discovered the reality, he was not safe to speak to or to meddle with for many hours afterwards.

On this particular occasion he had been pursuing his usual train of thought. Three months before, so he reckoned it, Marie had presented him with the third pledge of her gentle affection, and he found himself taking the liveliest pleasure in the infant's growth and comeliness. It may have been that he was so wrapped up in his thoughts that he was careless as to his guard; on the other hand, though he could not remember having noticed it before, what he was about to find may have been placed there prior to his arrival. At any rate, shortly before he was relieved, he noticed, lying in the angle between the wall of the fortress and the corner of the sentry-box a small bundle scarcely larger than his own knapsack. Having once become aware of its presence, it was not long before he had picked it up and brought it into his shelter to examine it. With a half suspicion of what it would contain, he unrolled the cloth in which it was wrapped. *A native baby of about a year old was the result.*

For some few moments Black Rat was too astonished to say or do anything. He stood staring at the slumbering infant at his feet. When he *did* recover himself, he had to pull his wits together. The question that required to be considered first was, how did it get there? With the exception of the commandant's lady and her maid, an acidulated vestal of fifty summers, there was no other woman, and certainly no native one, upon the place. The stockade was an extra strong one in that particular corner, and the ditch and bank were studded so thickly with sharp-pointed stakes of bamboo that it would have been impossible for the smallest child to have made its way in. He leaned over and surveyed the defences as well as he was able. But there was nothing there to explain the mystery. And yet one fact remained—the baby *had* got inside and was staring him in the face now. Just as he was wondering how he should account for its presence to his commanding officer, the relief came round, and ten minutes later he was on his way to his own quarters with the infant tucked under his arm. By virtue of being the first to discover it he had taken upon himself the rôle of guardian.

Reaching his own room, Black Rat paused at his bed, placed the child, who was now awake, upon the blankets and stooped to examine him. He was a chubby little fellow, and as perfectly shaped as it was possible for a baby to be. He lay upon his back and smiled up at his new custodian in a fashion that would have won the heart of the most inveterate child-hater—which

Black Rat was far from being. For some reason or another, that smile reminded him of his thoughts upon the battlements, and, when he came to look closer, he imagined he detected some slight resemblance to Marie's dark eyes in those now gazing up at him. It was very vague, of course, but still there *was* a resemblance, and with this discovery a strange feeling of affection came over the man. Why he should feel it he did not know, but it was strong enough to make him take the child up in his arms and examine it closely. The feel of the little soft body and the pressure of the tiny arms sent a thrill through him such as he had never experienced before; and when he put him back upon the bed it was with a gentleness in his touch that was more than grotesque in a man so rough. It was only then that it dawned upon him that he was but little versed in the ways and wants of children. Somewhere in the back of his brain there existed a belief that much fondling and continual feeding were necessary to their well-being. Therefore the child must be fed. To this end he approached the bed where Long Jean lay snoring, his extraordinary face set like stone, and his mouth wide open, showing a set of teeth as perfect as those in a dentist's showcase. He shook him roughly by the shoulder.

'Wake up,' he cried. 'Wake up, you snoring pig, and listen to me.'

Some moments elapsed before Long Jean could be brought back to his senses sufficiently to comprehend what was wanted of him. When he *did*, he sat up and stared stupidly at the man before him.

'What's this about a baby?' he asked. 'I want to sleep. I'm tired, and I'll have none of your jokes, Black Rat!'

'It's not a joke, pig,' returned the other, as the occupants of the neighbouring beds woke up and began to realise that there was some fun going forward. 'Get up. I have need of you.'

Implicit obedience had become so much part of the Auvergnat nature that he instantly complied with the other's command, and sat on the edge of his bed steadfastly regarding the bundle to which Black Rat pointed.

'It's a baby sure enough,' he muttered when he had finished the scrutiny, 'but where you stole it puzzles me. You will get into trouble for this, Black Rat.'

In his own mind he had set it down as certain that his comrade had purloined it from some native woman for the purpose of obtaining a sum by way of ransom. He knew Black Rat's character, and he was aware that when he required money there was nothing he would not do or attempt in order to obtain it. But why he should have waked him in the middle of the night to exhibit the small hostage passed his understanding.

Together they looked down on the infant, who was opening his mouth preparatory to screaming.

'The little one is hungry and must be fed,' said Black Rat. 'Go thou and procure some milk.'

If he had said 'bring me the moon,' it would have struck Long Jean as an equally easy task; but he was not accustomed to hesitate at the word of command, so he huddled on his clothes, and presently left the building upon his errand. A

quarter of an hour later he returned bringing a small cup of the precious fluid with him. But it was not until next day that it was discovered by what manner of means he had procured it from the commandant's cook. Murder was least among the threats that he used against that sleepy functionary.

'Bravo, *bon enfant*,' said Black Rat. 'Thou hast brought it. Now we must feed him—he is a fine child, and he must drink and grow fat.'

As he spoke, he seated himself upon the bed and took the babe upon his knee. Having adjured his companion to be more than careful in his handling of the jug, the ceremony commenced, one holding, the other pouring, and the barrack-room looking on. The child drank greedily, and having done so, snuggled himself down in Black Rat's arms to sleep. As he did so something suspended round his neck caught his nurse's eye. On the covering being drawn aside it proved to be a narrow slip of bamboo with something written in the native character upon it. Unfortunately neither man was conversant with the orthography of the country, but it chanced that there was an individual, fast asleep in a neighbouring room, who had attained to so much knowledge. Long Jean offered to procure him, and in a few minutes returned escorting him. The newcomer glanced at the writing in question and grunted scornfully.

'*Diantre!* You needn't have waked me up for this,' he said angrily. 'You know well enough what it is.'

'We don't know,' said Black Rat fiercely; 'but you'd better tell us, if you wish to save your skin.'

The man glanced from one to the other, and then at the bamboo, after which he said: 'The words are "Black Rat" and "Long Jean"—that's all.'

So saying, he turned upon his heel and went back to his room, leaving the two men staring at each other and the child in utter bewilderment. Who could have sent the child, and why, of all others, was it sent to them? It was a mystery too deep for words; but it was too late to attempt to solve it that night. In less than a quarter of an hour Long Jean had returned to his slumbers, and Black Rat was fast asleep holding the child in his arms. We doubt if a stranger picture could have been found in the whole length and breadth of Asia.

Next morning, and for the first and last time in his military career, Black Rat faced his commanding officer in the orderly-room with a supplication. His desire was as extraordinary as his presence there without an escort. The colonel could scarcely believe that he saw or heard aright. He listened to the account of the finding of the child in silence. Only when the other had finished his narrative with a request that he might be permitted to keep the infant in the barracks, did he find his voice. Then, turning to a sergeant beside him, he said:

'Take a file of men with you, and carry the child down to the border. If you allow the Chinese sentry to see it, he will soon find the mother.'

Then turning to Black Rat, he continued:

'Be off about your business, my man, and thank

your stars that I do not punish you for allowing the youngster to be brought in.'

Black Rat saluted, and was about to move away. Something in his face, however, must have appealed to his commanding officer's sympathy, for he bade him remain; and once more turning to the sergeant, said:

'Let the child be brought to me.'

The sergeant saluted, and left the room.

They had not long to wait before they heard the tramp of heavy boots in the veranda, and the sergeant and Long Jean entered the room, the latter carrying the baby in his arms.

The colonel took him from his gigantic nurse, and placed him upon the table, where the little fellow sat staring from one to another, twisting and twirling his tiny fingers and toes into the most intricate of patterns. So comical was his expression that even the colonel's grim face relaxed, and a faint smile hovered round the corners of his mouth. Black Rat and the Auvergnat studied his countenance anxiously. To the former it seemed impossible that any one could withstand such pleading. Now that he himself seemed likely to lose the infant, who had come so strangely into his life, he was beginning to understand how he would feel if the youngster were taken away altogether. What the Auvergnat thought no one will ever know: possibly he did not think at all.

Having examined the child with a close scrutiny, the colonel handed him back to his nurse, and then asked for the piece of bamboo, which had been found suspended round his neck. This was soon forthcoming, and, after he had read the inscription thereon, he handed it back to its owner.

'You are quite sure that you have no knowledge of the parents?' he asked.

Black Rat assured him that he had not.

'And I am to understand that it is your desire to take charge of this child?'

'That is my wish, *mon commandant*.'

'You will look after him, and not permit him to become a nuisance?'

The other promised that he would not.

'In that case take him; but remember, the first time he or you get into trouble, that moment he leaves the fort. Now be off!'

Neither of the two men waited to be bidden twice, but trooped out of the room, Black Rat carrying the child in his arms as a proof of victory. And so it came about that little Tata, for so he was named after an old comrade of the Pacific, became a member of the French Foreign Legion.

HISTORICAL SCOTTISH PROVERBS.

SCOTTISH proverbs are now not nearly so well known and so popular as they once were. The worshippers of a spurious refinement deem them vulgar, and, of course, we could not expect such homely phrases from the theological farmers, and cultured ploughmen, recently discovered by the ingenious gentlemen who are responsible for what is sometimes called 'the literature of the Kail Yaird.' Yet though proverbs have somewhat gone out of fashion with writers and readers alike, we cannot forget that the sturdy

giants who founded the classical school of Scottish fiction were thoroughly familiar with, and fully appreciated those quaint, homely, old-world sayings, and used them freely in their works. This is true of Galt, Hogg, and especially of Scott. The Waverley Novels literally teem with the rarest and choicest specimens of proverbial lore. Scott uses those curious old phrases with great aptness and point; and perhaps none of the immortal characters created by the genius of 'The Wizard of the North' clench an argument, or points a retort with a proverb more tellingly than Andrew Fairservice, the quaintly pawky, yet unblushingly selfish gardener in *Rob Roy*. 'If ye dinna think me fit' replied Andrew, in a huff, 'to speak like ither folk, gie me my wages, and my board wages, and I'se gae back to Glasgow—there's sma' sorrow at our parting, as the auld near (mare) said to the broken cart.'

There is a certain very pithy and pointed, but not very savoury proverb, which all attentive readers of Sir Walter know to have been a great favourite with the master. This saying he puts into the mouth of the postmistress at Fairfield, in *The Antiquary*, and the unconscious humour of the good woman is exceedingly amusing. 'Why, Mrs Heukbane,' said the woman of letters, pursing up her mouth, 'ye ken my gudeman likes to ride the expresses himsel—we maun gie our ain fish-guts to our ain sea-maws—it's a red half-guinea to him every time he munts his near.'

What may be called the secondary or subsidiary incidents are in many cases more interesting and important than the original sayings. The well-known and frequently quoted proverb, 'The mair mischief the better sport,' is associated with the striking personality of one of the most remarkable characters in Scottish history. On the day appointed for the execution of Lord Lovat, of the '45, when the guards entered his cell to conduct him to the place of execution, they informed his lordship that the platforms erected to give the public a good view of the gruesome procession to Tower Hill had collapsed, causing the death of several persons. 'Weel, weel,' grimly replied the doomed nobleman, 'the mair mischief the better sport.'

About the middle of last century an illegitimate son of Elliot of Lauriston in Liddesdale, the head of the family, served as a stable-boy with his relative, Elliot of Stobs. His master, who knew the connection, was in the habit of saying, as he mounted his horse, 'Better he that hauds the stirrup than he that louns on.' The event proved that the laird of Stobs, in applying this proverb to his servant, was a true prophet, for the young man entered the army, made a fortune in India, and on his return to Scotland purchased the ancestral estate. The saying, 'Like's an ill mark among ither folk's sheep,' is attributed to King James VI. One day, while walking about the grounds of Falkland Palace, the king observed Alexander Ruthven, brother of Lord Gowrie, asleep on one of the grassy banks, and looking at the lad closely, noticed in his bosom a knot of ribbon of a peculiar sort, which James recognised as his own gift to Queen Anne. The

king, who suspected his wife, immediately rushed off to tax her with falsehood, but fortunately one of the pages, guessing his intention, managed to restore to her the tell-tale ribbon before his arrival. Accordingly, when James demanded that his gift should be produced, she immediately complied with his request. At this, the king scratched his head, and his face expanded into a broad grin of satisfaction. 'Eh?' exclaimed he, 'like's an ill mark.' And so the proverb has come down to us with all the authority of the Scottish Solomon.

The Berwickshire rhyme,

Every fadge and every cake,
Every bannock had its make (match), but the bannock
of Tollishill,

together with the curious story from which it originated, is interesting as showing the primitive and patriarchal relations which existed between landlords and tenants in former times, even when, as in the present case, the laird was in the estimation of the outside world a very terrible person indeed. The saying took its rise from a romantic incident of the seventeenth century. Thomas Hardie, tenant of the farm of Tollishill, in the Lammermoors, through losses in his flock, was at one time unable to pay his rent. The farmer's wife, a very beautiful young woman, known as 'Midside Maggie,' interceded with the landlord, Lord Lauderdale, on her husband's behalf, and his lordship agreed to remit a year's rent, provided Maggie would bring him to Thirlestane Castle a snowball in the month of June. This she managed to do by storing a huge mass of snow in a cavern on the banks of the Leader, and on presenting her curious offering, Lauderdale at once gave her a receipt for a year's rent. In time the position of landlord and tenant was reversed, for the Earl was confined by Cromwell in the Tower of London, whilst Hardie had recovered his position. During Lauderdale's imprisonment no rent was collected from his tenantry, so Maggie proposed to her husband that they should personally convey to their landlord the money they owed him, and, for greater security, it was decided to conceal it in a bannock of peasemeal. When Lauderdale broke this goodly bannock, he burst into tears, and exclaimed, 'Well, every bannock has its make, but the bannock of Tollishill.' At the restoration Lauderdale rose to a high position in the state, and was created a duke, and whatever may have been his faults in other respects, he certainly did not fail in gratitude to his humble friend the farmer's wife. One day at the head of a gallant company, he rode up to the farmhouse, and dismounting, clasped a costly silver girdle round Maggie's waist, at the same time intimating that she, her husband, and the next generation would sit rent free on the lands they farmed. 'For,' said the Duke, 'truly every bannock had its make, but the bannock of Tollishill.'

Most people are familiar with the phrase, 'Jeddart, or Jedburgh Justice,' and understand that it implies the summary method of legal procedure which consists in hanging a culprit first and trying him afterwards. According to Crawford in his *Memoirs*, the phrase originated

in 1574, when the Regent Morton visited Jedburgh, and tried and executed, with undue haste, a large number of his political opponents, as well as many ordinary criminals. Another explanation of the phrase is that on the occasion of a trial, in which nearly twenty persons were implicated, the jury were equally divided; the remaining jurymen, who had slept soundly during the whole proceedings, suddenly awoke, and being asked his opinion, exclaimed, 'Hang them a'!

In a country so noted for its convivial habits as Scotland used to be, whatever it may be now, there are necessarily a number of sayings associated with immoderate potations. The saying, 'Sit still a little longer; we are all sober enough to get over Deacon Dickson's wall,' used to be a common expression at jovial parties in Edinburgh. It took its rise from an adventure that happened to a certain Deacon Dickson, as he was wending his way up the High Street to his house in the Castle Hill, after partaking rather too freely of the Corporation liquor. The deacon and the treasurer of his craft who accompanied him took it into their muddled heads that since their passage down the street earlier in the evening a wall had been built across the street between St Giles and the Royal Exchange. At any rate, the two worthies stuck at the supposed barrier, and got home to the Castle Hill by way of the Cowgate and the West Bow. The Deacon related his difficulty to his wife, and next morning she and her gossips went to look for the wonderful wall, and so the story got about. So regular and protracted were the drinking bouts amongst the Edinburgh legal and commercial fraternity of the last century that on rising 'a morning' was required to steady the nerves, and in the forenoon 'a meridian' was indispensable to whet the jaded appetite for the mid-day meal. In peculiarly aggravated cases of alcoholic depression the sufferer did his best to revive nature by partaking of what was familiarly known as 'a scoss,' a mess of food such as Irish stew. This term was popularly applied to an entertainment provided by Lucky Flockhart of the Potterrow and other Edinburgh vintners for their bibulous customers. The refreshment was appetising, though plain, generally consisting of a savoury stew.

A number of interesting sayings are associated with families of distinction. The proverb of the Douglasses, 'It were better to hear the lark sing than the mouse cheep,' was adopted by every Border chief to express what King Robert Bruce meant when he pointed out that the woods and hills of their native country were their safest bulwarks, instead of the fortified places which the English surpassed their neighbours in the art of assaulting or defending. Scott quotes this proverb very frequently, applying it to express the superiority of a free open-air life to that passed by those who reside in cities. The proverb, 'It's ill speaking between a fou' man and a fastin',' was said to have been used by the Earl of Douglas to keep Sir Patrick Grey, the king's messenger, in hand, while M'Lellan, tutor of Bombie, was beheld by his lordship's order. The traditional origin of the

great house of Buccleuch is indicated in the following rhyme:

And for the buck thou stoutly brought
To us up that steep heuch,
Thy designation ever shall
Be John Scott in Bucksleuch.

According to the old chronicler Satchells, one of two brothers who had come to Ettrick Forest seized a stag which stood at bay in the glen, now called Buccleugh in Ettrick, and grasping the animal by the horns, carried it to the king, who was on the top of a steep bank at a place called Cakra Bank; upon which the king is said to have addressed him in the words of the rhyme.

As lang as there's a cock i' the North,
There'll be a Fraser in Philorth,

is a prophecy predicting that the Frasers of Philorth—represented by Lord Saltoun—shall exist as long as the head of the Gordon clan.

The familiar proverb, 'Wha daur bell the cat?' has an interesting national application. When the nobles of Scotland proposed to seize and hang Cochrane, the detested favourite of James III., the Lord Gray asked, 'It is well said, but who will bell the cat?' The Earl of Angus accepted the challenge, and carried out his threat by arresting Cochrane and other minions of the king at Lauder, where they were hanged, as the song says, 'On Lauder's dreary flat.' Having hanged Cochrane and his companions over Lauder Bridge, Angus received and retained to his dying day the nickname of Archibald Bell the Cat.

The troubled annals of Scottish ecclesiastical affairs naturally contain a number of pithy and pointed sayings, which in course of time came to be regarded as national proverbs. The tutor of Glamis addressed the proverb, 'Better bairns greet than bearded men,' to King James VI. when, after the raid of Ruthven, the king burst into tears on finding himself a captive. But the saying has also an interesting ecclesiastical connection, for it is said John Knox applied it to Queen Mary—substituting women for bairns—after he had moved her to tears by his stern denunciations of her Romish proclivities. The not unnatural dislike which the Covenanters entertained towards their persecutors finds expression in the saying, 'The deil's pet lambs lo'e Claverse's lads,' implying that the troopers of Graham of Claverhouse were on good terms with the favourites of the devil. A similar feeling is indicated in the following rhyme:

Hauf a puddock, hauf a taed,
Hauf a yellow yoldrin,
Gets a drap o' the devil's bluid
Ilka May mornin'.

The popular prejudice in Scotland against the green plover or lapwing is believed to have originated owing to the birds having, by their cry and movements, frequently discovered to the troopers the solitary retreats of the persecuted Covenanters. The proverb, 'Ding down the nests, and the rooks will flee awa,' was unfortunately applied at the Reformation to the destruction of many of the finest monastic buildings in the kingdom.

The deil and the dean begin wi' ae letter,
When the deil gets the dean the kirk will be the better.

This is probably a saying of the 'killing times,' and indicates the popular dislike to the Episcopal form of church government. The saying, 'Hand over head, as men took the Covenant,' refers to the manner in which sixty thousand persons took the Covenant in Greyfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh, in 1638, a novel circumstance at the time, but one since paralleled by the French at the Revolution, in voting by 'acclamation.'

Like all other nations, the Scots have a large number of sayings relating to law and lawyers, and the majority of these are by no means favourable to the gentlemen of the 'long robe.' 'Hame's hamely,' quoth the deil, when he found himself in the Court o' Session; 'Pleaing at the law's like fighting through a whin bush—the harder the blows, the sairer the scarts; 'It's as easy to get siller frae a lawyer as butter frae a black dog's house' (throat). Both are proverbially impossible. The corrupt administration of justice in Scotland, previous to the Union, is indicated in the proverb, 'Show me the man, and I'll show you the law.' 'Deil mean them for justice, a wheen kithless loons,' was a phrase applied by a Scottish judge of the old school to the English judges sent by Cromwell to administer justice in Scotland. The saying shows how the native judges favoured their relatives and friends. So, in more recent times, as Scott tells us in *Redgauntlet*, when a young lawyer was supposed to be under the patronage of a judge, he was termed a peat, or pet. When, therefore, it was observed that a youthful advocate was treated with peculiar favour by one of the judges, his friends jocularly declared that he was 'As akin to a peats-ship and sheriffdom as a sieve is to a riddle.'

The native sayings relating to the Scottish character are, of course, usually favourable; while similar phrases of foreign origin are generally very much the reverse. A person who is believed to be particularly clever is said to be 'Ower far north for you.' According to a Russian proverb, 'Only a Jew can cheat a gipsy, only a Greek a Jew, and only the devil a Greek.' 'If the Scot likes a small pot, he pays a sure penny,' is an English saying, implying that the Scots, though frugal, were accounted honest. For many centuries previous to the union of the crowns, the English, in speaking of their northern neighbours, used to say, 'As false as a Scot' and 'Fair and false like a Scot,' forgetting, as Scott points out in *Note D.* to the *Talisman*, that their own encroachments on the independence of the weaker nation compelled the Scottish people to defend themselves by policy as well as force. The following may be given as proverbial descriptions of the three nationalities which constitute the United Kingdom.

The Englishman greets,
The Irishman sleeps,
But the Scotsman gangs till he gets it.

'The Englishman is ne'er content but when he is grumbling, the Irishman is never at peace but when he is fighting, the Scotsman is never at home but when he's abroad.' As indicating the wandering propensities of Scotsmen, it is said, 'A Scotsman, a crow, and a Newcastle grindstone travel a' the world ower.' We are

also told that 'a Scotsman is aye wise ahint the hand;' and the Yankees declare that 'a Scotsman is one who keeps the Sabbath—and every other damned thing he can lay his hands on.' The following uncomplimentary saying about Scotsmen was quoted by Lord Advocate Macdonald, in the House of Commons, March 6, 1888: 'Scotsmen tak' a' they can get, and a little more if they can.'

In this article we have only been able to touch the fringe of a very interesting subject, which is not nearly so well known as it deserves to be. From personal experience we can assure our readers that an excursion into the rich field of Scottish proverbial folklore will amply repay the diligent explorer who loves the quaint sayings of our forefathers, and the curious stories of an almost forgotten past.

WINTER IN THE UPLANDS OF LANARKSHIRE.

Now that mid-winter has cast its gloom over the landscape, what a contrast do these uplands present to the pleasing picture which stretched out before the eye during summer and autumn! To the townsman who enjoyed a month's sport or holiday in this peaceful retreat, as he speeds past in the comfortable compartment of an express train on his way to the sunny shores of the Mediterranean, the scene is cheerless and depressing—so different from that which he left ere October was yet run out, and while there lingered on the trees a profusion of wondrously-tinted leaves. If the weather be open and the day clear, he catches a glimpse of the hillsides and moorlands over which he wandered, enjoying the cooling breeze—the woodlands and fields, amid which meander the burns he fished in; but how bleak and barren are the hillsides, which he knew when purple with heather and fragrant with wild thyme; how desolate and sodden the fields with their borders of leafless hedgerows! The landscape once so gay and pleasant shows no colouring refreshing to the eye, except it be found in the dull green of the sombre pine woods, standing out so prominently beside the dark tracery of bare beeches, elms, and birch, which fringe their edges or cluster in roundels on the hillsides. Should, however, keen frost with snow have preceded the townsman's passage, then the landscape lies buried beneath a thick mantle of the purest snow, vibrating with a sparkling whiteness, as if in its fall it had caught and borne to earth myriads of tiny sunbeams, and crystallised them into diamonds. The brooks and streams are ice-bound, the waterfalls are changed into hanging columns of sheeny variegated marble: even the broad, slow waters of the Clyde are bridged over to form a footway for man and beast. In the background rises cold and grand, the hill of Tinto, whose rounded crest throughout spring and winter is capped with snow, or veiled in storm by a moving canopy of mist.

And cheerless as is the outlook to the passing traveller, his sense of the desolateness of these uplands would be more than confirmed could he halt and visit his former haunts. Standing as these do at an elevation of between eight hundred and a thousand feet above the sea-level, winter is here always more severe and protracted than in

districts lower or nearer the coast-line. During frost the thin mountain air is clear, crisp, and exhilarating; the cold, though intense, feels bracing and stimulating. When snow falls it generally lies for many weeks, shrouding hill and dale, and filling up the roadways with deep wreaths, which require to be cut through ere traffic can be resumed. And so, with the approach of winter, not only do the uplands change their robes, but loneliness and silence creep over them. Nature seems then to be mourning over her forlorn estate, for she has been deserted by all who courted her companionship and revelled with her in the sunshine of summer. The gay and light-hearted are fled. Here they found not a home but a place of holiday sojourn. There are no creatures remaining—excepting such as are bound to the soil—by necessity or duty. The sparse population are seldom seen together in groups. Each toiler for the most part pursues his vocations by himself, and so his character is formed and he becomes reliant, resourceful, undemonstrative. The ploughman with his team has the lea to himself, and spends the day in a silence broken only by lilting a song, or whistling some simple air which has caught his fancy, to cheer on the strong willing horses that go steadily along turning up the red soil behind them. An occasional game-keeper on his round may pause to exchange a few remarks with him, and then each parts to resume his separate task. The shepherd, with checkered plaid over breast and shoulders, and rough collie at heel, is the solitary monarch of the hills—there is no tourist or sportsman to contest his right; and as he swings along through the withered ling and bleached bent with easy pace and watchful outlook for any stragglers from his flock, he seems proud of his constancy to his native wilds, for, while others admire and visit them in sunshine, he alone is true in storm and sleety cold.

And how quiet, too, is the landscape! A silence pervades the air. No lark springs from the turf to burst into song above the head. The twittering swallow no longer glides past, hawking for insects. The summer warblers, every one, are gone. Save the few birds which frequent the farmyard or have been drawn to the river-side, the rooks that follow the plough or gather round the fallen sheep, all the others have left, or are on their way to more genial climes. In the fields and moorlands there is no longer heard the restless cry of the peewit, the drumming of the snipe, the 'peep' of the plover, and the whistle of the whaup. At this season of long nights and short commons, the few birds which are hardy enough to stay have no time for the relaxation of song or frolic. They are intensely in earnest. Busy must they be from dawn to dark, gathering their food, which is ever becoming scarcer and scarcer. Grouse and blackcock have abandoned the higher grounds and now search the stubbles for chance pickles of grain, or perch on the hedgerows to eat the crimson haws. With the sun low down on the horizon a sense of depression has come over beasts as well as birds. Their energies are concentrated on solving the problem of ways and means. The restless hare which crosses your path is not fleeing from fox or dog, but cannot await the oncoming of the shades of evening, and is now in search of some turnip pit unprotected by wire netting. The rabbit, which makes for

the covert at your approach, has found the long watches of the past night too short to gather the wherewithal to satisfy the cravings of hunger. And what a tale of privation endured by hares and rabbits do these gnawed trunks of beech and ash tell! Surely it was a merciful Providence which taught some of their summer congeners, hedgehogs and mice, to hibernate till the breath of spring awakes them from their long sleep. In contrast to the persistent endeavours of these wild creatures to find maintenance for themselves, domestic animals give up the attempt as fruitless, and resign themselves in confident dependence upon the provision of man. The cattle, driven from the warm shelter of their shed, know from experience that it is vain to wander over the pasture-land in quest of herbage, and crowd together in a cheerless flock at the field gate, awaiting the coming of the byremaid; while every now and then their mute reflections are disturbed by the galloping into their midst of a pair of colts, which are careering around to keep themselves warm. The hardy black-faced sheep no longer climb the hillsides at nightfall, but patiently scrape away the snow and nibble at the short herbage on the lower grounds, all the while watchful for the shepherd's cart with hay, and staying within easy hail of their wonted feeding-place in the friendly 'biel' of some sheltering wood.

But as it is not always gold which glitters, so neither are these uplands so dreary and desolate as they appear. If winter robs the scene of its look of fertility and warmth, the air of the song of bird and hum of insect, it brings into stronger evidence the abundant store and provision which a hardy and capable class of agriculturists and peasantry have laid against its approach. The 'farm-towns' may lie far apart from each other, but yet every one of them, embowered amid pines, or shaded by a clump of gnarled ash or poplars, is a picture, out of which are reflected peace, plenty, and good cheer. Beside his home the farmer has placed his trim stacks of hay and straw, his potato pits, and turnip bings. Fowls in plenty frequent the courtyard, and ducks and geese sport on the mill-dam. In a cosy nook by the burnside stand the ploughmen's cottages, around the open doors of which play the ruddy, unkempt weans. The farm-house may look chilly and damp, with its walls overgrown with moss and lichen; and if it be thatched, sparrows and rats may have played such havoc with the straw covering as to suggest dripping ceilings and draughty cornices; but enter at the goodman's bidding, and the chilliness of the outside air, and the suspicion of discomfort within, are soon forgotten, as you bask in the glow of the blazing fire. You are pressed to remain. As evening falls, neighbours come in, and genial company gathers around the upland farm-house ingle. The goodwife prepares the tea-table, decking it with home-baked, crisp, oatmeal cakes, and creamy scones, and cheese which her own hands have made. Then story and old-world tales, with many a merry joke, go round. And so, when the time for parting comes—all too quickly—you feel that in these uplands there are some spots which are neither desolate nor cold—peaceful homes in which abide warm hearts and kindly hands, that can dispense hospitality with a native grace, as charming as it is sincere.

The one and only pastime of these uplands is the game of curling. There may be found a few who have kicked a football, or bowled a cricket-ball; but where is the man who has not thrown the channel stone? When the frost has bound the sods of earth, and the plough is held in the furrow as in a vice, what can the countrymen do but take the holiday, forced on them by a considerate Providence, and meet on the frozen loch? Thus a frost, which turns his soft land into adamant, exercises a genial influence upon the uplander himself. His usually distant and reserved nature is thawed, and he courts the companionship of others, who, like himself, are curlers. A new interest is given to life; conversation no longer centres on matters that pertain to the sheepfold or byre, the field or the market. A fresh topic has sprung up, and curling casts its bewitching halo around and over all.

And with what energy, skill, and determination is the game played! The pond which rises before the writer's mind, and on which he has seen many a well-matched game contested, is a sheet of water overlooked by a stately mansion. In an atmosphere as pellucid as the very ether, and on ice as pure as crystal, so transparent that through it may be seen the sedge and weeds in the muddy bottom, some five or six riuks are wont to meet in friendly play, or in mortal combat with champions from some neighbouring clubs. At such bonspiels as the latter, every skip directs, and every man plays as if the fate of empires depended on whether or not the stone thrown be well soled on the 'howe,' with an 'inturn of the wee finger,' with plenty weight to carry it well on over the hogscore, to be 'cowed,' to 'break an egg,' on an opponent's stone, which lies the nearest to the tee, and at last come in a 'perfect pat-lid' itself. As the day advances, so increases the excitement; and the frosty air of the welkin rings and resounds with the roar of the speeding stones, and the shouts of the combatants, until the shadows cast thin and long by the sinking sun, as, like a ball of fire, he enters the dark bank of cloud rising over the western horizon, give warning of night's approach. And then, when the stars are beginning to appear as if suspended from the solid firmament, the meeting disperses in small bands, which wend their way homewards, each discussing the events of the day.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE SPHINX.

By ARTHUR M. HORWOOD,
Author of *A Cruise to the Mediterranean*.

EGYPT, nearly one hundred years ago: to be precise, the 21st of July 1798.

Sunset in the Great Desert: the Battle of the Pyramids has been fought this day, and General Bonaparte's invading army, as a matter of course, is victorious. In the morning their idolised leader, cold and calm, unaffected by the blazing sun and suffocating atmosphere, as he sat his long-maned horse, with his tight blue Republican uniform buttoned up to his chin, had proclaimed sonorously: 'Soldiers, from the summit of yonder Pyramids, forty ages behold you!' and ere night closes over the scene, these stupendous monuments of the past and the mysterious Sphinx witness the overthrow of the Mamelukes, and the triumph of the French.

The sun sinks lower and lower, finally its red disc dips below the horizon, and its ruddy glow deserts the Sphinx, creeping away upwards like a crimson veil lifting, until its last gleam is extinguished from the crown of the colossal head, and the mutilated features and gazing eyes overlooking from on high the battle-field, grow indistinct and become lost.

Below, on the plain, the soldiers of the Republic are busy despoiling the dead. The Mamelukes are known to carry all their riches upon their persons; and many a common soldier that evening finds himself suddenly become a wealthy man, with jewels and precious stones taken from the body of a bey, or even one of lower degree.

A thin, wiry Frenchman, his enormous cocked hat, with a tricolour cockade as big as a saucer, resting on the nape of his neck, a pipe in his mouth, and his face smeared and darkened with gunpowder-smoke, is bending over a richly-garbed Mameluke, his hands engaged in searching for valuables. The spoiler's face is not pleasant to behold: disappointed greed is strongly marked thereon. He has not been fortunate. Every body he comes to he finds has already been rifled by his more expeditious comrades; and the '*sacré*!' come from between his clenched teeth with frequency and extreme bitterness. He gives the body a kick, and is on the point of leaving it, when, as an afterthought, he passes his nimble fingers through the Mameluke's sash.

Fastened within the folds he feels a solid substance. He tears it out, and examines it. It is a walnut. He eyes it contemptuously, pauses, places it between his jaws, and cracks it.

There is something strange about this walnut. He spits shell and kernel into his hand, and then stifles a cry of amazement. Lo! in his palm lies the splintered shell, and that which it had been contrived to conceal—a large brilliant that gives off flashes of light, red and blue scintillations, rivaling the stars that palpitate and throb over the desert, and look down upon man engaged in his sordid acts.

The Frenchman trembles with excitement. He possesses a diamond so large that it had closely filled the shell. It represents a fortune!—a fortune! When he, Pierre Lefèvre, returns to *La Belle France* he will be an opulent citizen; he will have no need to work when he retires from the army; his future is assured! His volatile nature asserts itself in prompting him to actually cut a caper over the dead, and to wave his pipe above his head.

His eyes are feasting upon the sparkling gem in his hand. His thoughts are too busy building castles in the air to notice that the Mameluke he has robbed is not yet dead, and that he has feebly drawn a pistol from the same sash that concealed the treasure.

Beware, Pierre Lefèvre! See your danger, and spring aside. But no; the Gaul is intoxicated with his spoil. He has no eyes for aught else than the contents of his grimy, lean hand, and, perhaps, to watch that no comrade is approaching him. He fears nothing from the dead; they won't claim back their property; they are no more to him than sacks—logs—bundles of clothes.

Beware, Pierre! that bundle of clothes at your feet does not contain death yet, but it

is able to deal death to one who is rejoicing in living this calm night.

'Allons, enfans de la patrie,'

sings the French soldier, his excess of joy finding further vent in the refrain he first heard when he enrolled under the tricolor six years ago in the far-away blue Vosges of Alsace.

'Le jour de gloire est arri—'

He never finishes the line: the sharp crack of a pistol shot disturbs the air, and down goes the Frenchman, kicking up the sand with his heavy boots, and clutching frantically at the diamond, which his stiffening fingers are unable to close upon; his efforts to seize it only burying it deeper and deeper in the soft, warm sand, together with a little leather tobacco-pouch, within which he was going to enclose it.

The moon is about to rise; it has thrown its first beams upon the summits of the pyramids, edging them with molten silver; then presently they illuminate the placid features of the Sphinx, that looks down with a terrible, majestic solemnity upon the battle-field. Presently the orb of night shows itself clear of the horizon, and, sailing high in the heavens, floods the desert with its refulgent light. The Frenchman is lying side by side with the Mameluke: they are brothers at last: all that has passed between them is forgotten. Neither has any desire now to possess the diamond; neither will strive to wrest it from the other. While, as for the innocent gem itself, it is left in peace beneath the surface of the Great Desert, never again, perhaps, to be coveted while this earth, that is slowly revolving through the night, lasts, while human passions endure.

Egypt, eighty-six years later.

It is the evening of the 10th of October 1884; and the Camel Corps of Her Britannic Majesty, Queen Victoria, has arrived from Cairo, to camp out here in the shadow of the Pyramids and the Sphinx until further orders, *en route* for Khartoum, where brave General Gordon is cut off, and surrounded by the Mahdists.

Since Bonaparte delivered his famous address to the French troops—since the power of the Mamelukes was broken—since that starlit scene of despoiling the dead by the Republicans—nearly one hundred years have rolled by. From the summit of the Pyramids it is forty-one ages that behold the advent of another invading army; and the Sphinx, with its everlasting stare, is the object of wonderment and awe to the strange armed men from beyond the seas. These soldiers are very different in appearance from those of the last century. The huge cocked hats and long swallow-tailed coats have given place to sun-helmets, loose tunics, cord-breeches, and 'putties.' The flint-lock musket is superseded by the breech-loading Martini rifle. The animation of the Gaul has superseded the stolidity of the Briton; the sallow faces and aquiline features have given place to the roast-beef complexions and stout proportions of old England.

The sun has once again set, and the Sphinx, losing its colour, looms darkly over the encampment as the brilliant stars flash out.

Presently, when the tents have grown quiet, after the bugles have sounded 'Last post,' and 'Lights out,' the moon rises, and a tall young British guardsman is surprised by a comrade in

the act of covertly examining a photograph by its clear rays. It is the portrait of a girl, and the poor bit of pasteboard has grown limp and cracked in the breast-pocket of its owner's tunic. At the present moment it is sustaining damage from salt tears that are blistering its surface.

'Here, put away that bloomii' picture, and go to sleep, looney!' exclaims a jeering voice. A pair of riding-breeches is thrown deftly at the head of the sentimental young soldier, and the photo is sent flying out of his hand.

The young man is wroth, but does not utter a word, fearing that his voice may sound broken and betray his recent emotion. He acts instead.

The bully jumps up to fetch back his breeches, when he receives a staggering blow in the chest that lays him flat on his back. He is up again in a moment, and a sharp scuffle ensues. Our young soldier is getting rather the better of it, when the other spies the photo lying on the sand at his feet. With his naked heel he treads it down, until it is completely hidden from sight, then catching up his breeches, he aims a parting blow at his opponent, and retreats to his tent with a nasty laugh.

Poor Tom Burton has a long search that night for the photo of his sweetheart. I don't know, though, whether I ought by rights to call Mary Green his sweetheart; for, although he loves her beyond all powers of description, yet he has never courted her, and never expects to. The girl is blind, and it is clearly obvious to Tom that no one but a man in very comfortable circumstances can afford to take unto himself a blind wife. Tom Burton has not a sixpence in the world besides his pay, and as he is by no means clever, there is little prospect of his rising in any profession or trade; consequently, he will never be able to marry her, however madly he loves her. And what makes matters worse, is the knowledge that she returns his affection. Moreover, she is very unhappy in her present surroundings, where she is regarded as a burden; so she will pine away, and die before her youth is passed. Oh! that he could take her away! Oh! that he could place her beyond the atmosphere of penury, and cheer her poor life!

He grinds his teeth in sheer bitterness as he hunts for the faded 'counterfeit presentment' of her sad, pretty face. With his hands he digs up the sand, now to the right, now to the left, anger, anxiety, and sadness striving together in his heart.

At last his perseverance is rewarded. His fingers come in contact with the poor little photo, more crushed than ever, in no ways improved by its interment. He has also at the same time found something else in the sand, which he turns to examine, after he has restored his beloved photo to its resting-place. By the light of the moon he regards a small leather tobacco-pouch—very old, worn, and rotten. It bears an inscription, worked in silk or thread, which, after a little trouble, he deciphers to be: '*Pierre Lefèvre—10ième Infanterie Légère de la République.*'

A strange thrill passes through the British soldier. Tom Burton is sufficiently well-read to know that last century the army of the French Republic came hereabouts; and he is aware that he has come across a relic of history. He finds

himself thereupon suddenly urged to renew his burrowing, on the off-chance of bringing to light further mementoes of Bonaparte's army. He has no sooner re-commenced his digging than a sparkle from the turned-up sand meets his eye. He puts forth his hand and touches a hard substance. It flashes blue and violet in turns, and Tom Burton sinks back on his heels, trembling.

He has found a huge diamond!—the very diamond that cost Pierre Lefèvre his life eighty-six years ago! Once more has the gem returned to the hands of men, to stir pulses, to excite passions, to change the drift of lives.

Tom Burton soon satisfies himself that it is a real diamond, by drawing the edge of one of its facets across the glass of his plated watch. In one minute he has passed from comparative poverty to affluence. While the beams of the moon were stealing, inch by inch, round the curve of the Sphinx's cheek, the young soldier's soul was illuminated with a joy that he had never before experienced. In imagination he had clasped the blind girl to his heart, never more in this life to leave her; he had seen her face brighten and smile into his; her sightless eyes had almost returned his gaze of rapture; no more was he an unhappy, roving mortal—no more was she a hapless, uncared-for creature: happiness was to be theirs to the end of the chapter, through the medium of the flashing, scintillating stone he held in his hand. It would be happiness—such perfect happiness that—

Something that was not the diamond had thrown off a cold gleam before Tom Burton's eyes, and it had the effect of suddenly dashing the cup of prospective bliss from the dreamer's lips.

It was the glint of a sentry's bayonet beyond the encampment, as the man turned towards the east. In that instant Tom Burton had realised, clearer than he had ever before, that he was a soldier, whose duty was to slay, and, if needs, be slain. An awful terror, a new and appalling aspect of his situation, with regard to impending events, takes possession of him. Like many other young fellows who enlist, and are ordered on active service, the reflection that he would probably fall in the fray had never seriously engaged his mind, or, if it had, he had dismissed the thought carelessly. But now, as it were, he awoke to grim, stern reality. He sees himself revealed with ghastly vividness on the brink of a precipice. He has found wealth, but he is to lose his life before another month passes. The whole campaign is before him, and it stretches itself before his mind's eye as an impassable torrent which will swallow him up into darkness and extinction.

In an agony of despair he flings himself upon his face on the sand, whispering half aloud:

'I shall be killed!—killed!—never return!'

For the first time he values his life and fears death—all owing to the influence of the Mameluke's diamond.

While, as if to mock him, as he lies prone upon the disturbed sand of the vast desert, there comes on a gust of the night-wind the concluding words of a distant sentry's challenge: 'And all's well.'

When the Camel Corps returned home from their unsuccessful attempt to rescue General Gordon, it was rumoured that Private Thomas Burton, 4th Grenadier Guards, had unexpectedly come into some money, and was going to buy

himself off. And amongst his comrades there were those who nodded and said: 'A good thing for him too! the fight's gone out of him, and he's not the man he was.'

The good fellows did not know, perhaps, that occasionally love may spoil a soldier.

FOUR DREAMERS.

'A pleasing land of Drowsyhed it was.'

THOMSON'S *Castle of Indolence*.

I.

WITH a boomsome knock, like an earthquake's shock,

The postman comes diurnally;

And my spirit grieves, for the letters he leaves

Say 'Declined with thanks' eternally.

To live as a bard I am striving hard,

But I find it a vain experiment:

Yet it's different quite in the dreams of night,

When the postman's boom means merriment.

For I dream the things that the postman brings

Are acceptances, proofs, remittances;

And that wealth is got by my pen—and not

The most paltry and lean of pittances!

II.

I nursed a craze, from my youngest days,

For the athlete's sports Herculean:

The wrestling match, and the football catch,

And the race o'er waves cerulean

Were aye, when a boy, my summit of joy,

And my rivals were all afraid of me,

Till I suffered last year a hurt severe

Which a cripple for life has made of me!

Daily I pine with a woful whine,

But I greet night's dreams with gratitude—

When, by magic healed, I scour the field,

Or pose in the prize-ring's attitude!

III.

I am only, at most, the shadowy ghost

Of an erstwhile proud philatelist.

No collector of stamps could last winter boast

Of superlative stamps so fat a list;

But with digits light, on a summer night,

A marauder came, and plundered me

Of my more-than-wealth, and the deed of stealth

Has from bliss terrestrial sundered me.

Yet often it seems, in my nightly dreams,

That I still, as of old, am lingering

Round the precious hoard that my soul adored,

And the beautiful dead-heads fingering!

IV.

I'm tarrying here, in my ninetieth year,

With the Union's gray garb cloaking me:

And the tears oft swim in my eyes grown dim,

And the great sobs rise, half-choking me,

As my thoughts recall the beloved ones all

Who have, one after one, forsaken me.

But my tears are dried in the bright night-tide!

Oh, I wish ye would ne'er awaken me

From those visions fair, when my soul is 'ware

Of some angel power translating me

To the presence, once more, of my friends of yore

Who are up in the skies awaiting me!

WM. EDMONDSON.

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THE COMING REVIVAL OF SOUTH AMERICA.

By HERBERT H. BASSETT.

NATIONS rise and fall, but rarely rise again. The overwhelming disaster which brings poverty and spells ruin for the people seems to break up the whole nation, to destroy its spirit, and disorganise its life. There is such a thing as national death, and such another as national resurrection. And it is through these phases of the life of countries that the republican states of South and Central America are passing to-day. Much of the inner history of the Argentine Republic, Mexico, Uruguay, Brazil, Peru, and Chili has yet to be written. To the ordinary lay reader their history conveys no meaning beyond that of countries which have been ruined by civil wars, killed by the Frankenstein-monsters of their own creation. But the observer who has followed their history for years knows that there are many black pages; pages which record political and financial corruption, bribery and intrigue. It has been these vices—not altogether unknown in the present-day lives of greater nations—which have thrown the South American States into that chaos which comes of national bankruptcy. It was these vices which ate into the heart of Buenos Ayres, the city which was justly esteemed as containing the most active and intelligent population of all South America, and brought about the grave financial collapse of the Argentine Republic in 1890. It was owing to similar causes that its sister states were reduced to poverty; but if we are to understand and appreciate the forthcoming revival of which I propose to write, we must first grasp the immediate and individual circumstances of each country.

Insufficient distinction is made in this country between the Argentine nation and the Argentine provinces. The downfall of the National Government was, at the outset, due to the reckless extravagance of the provincial governments, chief among which was the Province of Buenos Ayres.

This province indulged from 1888 up to 1890 in a reckless and fraudulent increase of issues of Cédulas, the lending of money being on a basis enormously in excess of the real value of the properties mortgaged. Indulgence was given to negligent and dishonest debtors; transfers of debts to penniless individuals were accepted on properties of little or no value; and 'vales' were taken instead of cash payments in liquidation of mortgages. These were among the wrongs committed by government officials, and protected by the highest political and legislative powers of the province. A similar state of things was being enacted in the other provinces. When the collapse of 1890 came, the finances of the country were thrown into a chaotic condition. The provinces defied the central government, civil war broke out, and small revolutions raged in various parts of the country at one and the same time. Ruin stared the creditors of the country in the face, and these included not only English investors, but stockholders in France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, and Spain. Argentine securities ceased to be in favour among investors, who daily hastened to sell them on a falling market. Argentine 1884 loan fell in market value within a few months from 66½ to 29; Buenos Ayres 1882-86 from 70½ to 27; Cordova Sixes from 38 to 20; Entre Rios from 47 to 18½; Santa Fé 1883-84 from 60 to 18½; and Tucuman from 54 to 25. This affords a slight idea of the *débâcle* which took place. Railways were, of course, equally affected. Credit fell to such a low level that whilst in 1890 the total imports amounted to \$142,000,000, they fell away in 1891 to \$67,000,000. English capital was frightened away; immigration ceased almost entirely; life and property became insecure owing to the revolutions in the provinces against the increased taxes; even justice seemed to have been forgotten, and the number of unsettled suits became overwhelming. The years 1891 to 1895 saw the struggle of a naturally rich country against the havoc of the past. Bountiful harvests, coming at a time when markets abroad were profitable,

began to have their effect. National industries increased, and the importation of foreign articles began to decrease. The exaggerated credit of former years having been curtailed, the expenditure of the people fell off, and the results were seen in a balance of trade in favour of the country, exports much exceeding imports. The exports climbed up from \$91,515,000 in 1893 to \$101,281,000 in 1894, and to \$119,000,000 in 1895. Dr Romero, the president, applied himself vigorously to the rebuilding up of the country's position. Already he has reorganised the provincial debts, and is well on the way towards the liquidation of that scandalous fraud, the Cedula Bank of Buenos Ayres. The English investor is being won over again to Argentina, and when capital once more flows freely into the country regeneration will be complete. A naturally rich country like Argentina is only held back by want of foreign capital. It is the foreigner who acquires from the Argentines a large area of agricultural land, and calls in the assistance of nomadic colonists to till it, and eventually leave it a good pasturage.

The English-built railways are giving valuable help to the development and opening up of the country; and, judging by its agricultural prosperity, its future seems well assured. 'The capacity of the Argentine Republic to produce wheat,' says Mr Arthur Peel, of Buenos Ayres Legation, 'may be almost said to have taken the world by surprise.' Fifteen years ago the area of cultivation did not amount to more than 180,000 acres, and the republic was obliged to import to the extent of 177,000 tons. The area now cultivated is said to stand at over fifteen million acres. And if the statement of Mr Fleiss, who from time to time was appointed as an expert and official reporter both on behalf of the National and Provincial Governments, is correct, it appears that out of a total of 1,212,600 square miles there are some 240,000,000 acres suitable for the production of wheat. When it is, therefore, taken into consideration that 15,000,000 acres is the amount now computed to be given over to agriculture, it will readily be appreciated what an immense extent of land still remains to be tilled. It is, however, by looking at the figures with regard to the export of wheat that some idea of the enormous advance of Argentina as a wheat-growing country may perhaps best be acquired. There was exported in—

Year.	Tons.
1889.....	22,806
1891.....	395,008
1892.....	470,000
1893.....	1,008,000
1894.....	1,608,000

In fact, in 1893, the country which only thirteen years before had imported wheat, had, as regards the export of this commodity, actually taken the rank of the third most important country. Moreover, it has to be taken into calculation that no other country in the world can produce a quarter of wheat more cheaply. Argentina has also a great future as a stock-breeding country. The live stock in the republic may be calculated at 25,000,000 cattle, 80,000,000 sheep, and 5,000,000 horses. The industry is chiefly centred in the province of Buenos Ayres, and in a lesser degree in those of Entre Rios, Santa Fé, and Cordova.

In 1892, 40,000 sheep and 125,459 cattle were exported. This increased in 1893 to 71,167 sheep and 201,645 cattle, and in 1894 to 122,218 sheep and 220,400 cattle. Mr Herbert Gibson, who is well known to the English sheep-farmer, told the British consul in Buenos Ayres that 'there are still vast tracts of land in the North Province of Santa Fé, in the territory of Central Pampa, and all that south of the Republic, capable of producing store-stock at cheap prices, and as yet unpeopled.' He added that he thought he was justified in stating that the Argentine Republic could afford to undersell the whole world's meat trade, and remain sole caterer.

The other great River Plate state, Uruguay, has passed through much the same stages. The difficulties in which the 'Oriental' Republic was involved in 1890, and the powers of recuperation which it has since displayed, run parallel with Argentina. Extravagance went hand in hand with corruption at Monte Video, just as it did at Buenos Ayres, and the result was the same—disaster, default, and ruined credit. Uruguay, however, was in the fortunate position of possessing a gold standard, and thus escaped a great many other evils that beset its sister republic, not one of which is in a similar position regarding currency. When the Baring collapse brought the whole pack of South American cards tumbling down, Uruguay four per cent. stock fell in value on the London market from seventy-six to thirty, a loss of forty-six points in 1890 and 1891. This fall was greatly accentuated, however, by the opposition of a strong minority in Monte Video to the Rothschild scheme. But this scheme proved the saviour of the Republic. By the consolidation of debt, it made it possible for the Republic to regularly meet its engagements, and thus slowly re-establish the credit which it had lost. How far it succeeded may be gathered from the fact that a loan of over one and a half millions was successfully issued in London a few months ago, a thing which would never have been thought possible in 1892. This money is to be used for the creation of the Banco de la Republica, which will lend considerable assistance to the Republic in the re-habilitation of its lost position. There are, as might be expected, some people who believe that the new national bank will be the means of re-starting the Uruguayans upon their old system of extravagance; but there is every reason to believe that the bank will do much towards remedying many other minor evils, such as the neglect to pay official salaries at due date, &c. The condition of the country at the present time is a very prosperous one. The improvement in the commerce which commenced in 1893 was continued during 1894 and 1895, and although the total value of exports in the latter year was less than that for 1894, still the balance of trade for the year remained in favour of the Republic. Whereas the revenue in 1893-94 amounted to \$14,570,555, it increased in 1894-95 to \$14,976,818, whilst the returns for the present year set the revenue at \$15,581,299 and the expenditure at \$14,634,786. According to Mr A. Saenz de Zumaran, Uruguay Chargé de Affaires, the government will make in the course of January a large amortization of the debt, which will be at least £100,000.

In turning to Mexico, the chief of the Central American States, we find a country different from the other states, inasmuch as it has had to suffer adversity when it was most strong. The financial position of the country had been built up on a solid basis; judicious government had given a wonderful impetus to the progress of commerce; foreign capital was plentiful, and credit was good. But the collapse of silver upset its currency, reduced its revenue (very largely received from its exports of silver), and threw on its public debt the burden of a steadily falling exchange. I need not dwell at length upon the results of its impaired credit upon the world's market, for they are too well known. Mexico stands as an example—I believe the only example—of a Spanish-American republic overcoming its financial difficulties. Señor Limantour, the finance minister, concluded his last financial statement with these words: 'I may be allowed to state, without fear of being taxed with presumption, that in the history of our country this is the first time that the president of the republic can announce to congress, as I have now the pleasure of doing in his name, that the receipts for the last months of the present year exceed the expenditure; that the budget for next year can be established under conditions which will insure its equilibrium; and that the account of the Federal Treasury for the present year, which is sent this day to the Chamber of Deputies, shows a considerable surplus. For the future the vigorous development of the vital elements of the country will be, comparatively speaking, an easy task, by perfecting the working of all the public services; but, in any case, neither the nation nor its representatives must ever allow themselves to be allured by the fascination of an improving financial position, or forget for a moment those principles of order and wise economy which have so greatly contributed to save the country from the most perilous dangers which we have just succeeded in surmounting.'

In considering the future of Mexico, the agricultural resources of the country have too often been overlooked. In this, it is true, the country is young, for its efforts in the past have been directed towards the development of its mineral wealth. A greater part of its revenue was drawn from beneath the earth and not on the earth, and when silver collapsed, the country's resources collapsed with it. Today the government are directing their efforts towards agricultural development. It is only of late that the capabilities of the country as a coffee producer have attracted the attention which they undoubtedly deserve. The almost total failure of coffee plantations in Ceylon and all Eastern countries has encouraged planting in Mexico, and the profits which have already been obtained seem to justify a further extension of the industry. Mexico is also producing large crops of rice and sugar; it grows wheat and maize in abundance; and cocoa is being cultivated on a large scale. Tobacco plantations are increasing in number and size, and I am told by Señor Adolfo Bülle, the Mexican consul to Great Britain, who has recently returned from the country, that since the Cuban revolt broke out, planters from the island are going into Mexico by hundreds. The following table is significant

of the advance of the country. It shows the difference between the imports and exports in each of the last three fiscal years for which figures are available:

Years.	Imports.	Exports.	Excess of Exports.
1892-93.....	£43,413,131	£87,509,207	£44,096,076
1893-94.....	30,287,489	79,343,287	49,055,798
1894-95.....	34,000,440	90,854,953	56,854,513

This year the improvement promises to be even greater. The interstate duties have been abolished by law throughout the Republic, and this removes one of the greatest impediments to the commerce of the country, and has given an impetus to trade. The changes wrought in the last few years might almost be termed a financial romance, so sudden has been the change for the better.

I am not loth to confess that, as with most pictures so here, there are two points of view. The other side may be found in pointing to Brazil, to Chili, and to Paraguay as existing examples of South American States. It is true that in much the same way as gold is tried by fire, so do countries learn the weight of their responsibilities after they have been discredited and dishonoured. In the great crash of 1890, when the securities of South American States fell pell-mell, Chilean stocks were least affected. Chili was then regarded as the soundest of all the states, and it continued on its way unaffected by the troubles which assailed the other countries. But Nemesis has overtaken it, and there are strange facts speaking of political corruption and national unrest, which must come to light. It is so with Brazil. Its financial difficulties are the inevitable outcome of a long series of economic and political excesses. Paraguay is in much the same position, although on a smaller scale. But standing out from these remaining examples of national corruption are Argentina, Uruguay, and Mexico; and these, it may be hoped, will lead South America towards that revival which has been so long predicted, and so often postponed.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER IV.—NOT IN THE PROGRAMME.

LADY CAROLINE SELLWOOD's incomparable Wednesdays were so salient a feature of those seasons during which her husband was in office, and her town house in St James's Square, that their standard is still quoted as the ideal of its kind. These afternoons were never dull. Lady Caroline cast a broad net, and her average draught included representatives of every decent section of the community. But she also possessed some secret recipe, the envy and the despair of other professional hostesses, and in her rooms there was never an undue preponderance of any one social ingredient. Every class—above a certain line, not drawn too high—was represented; none was overdone; nor was the mistake made of 'packing' the assembly with interesting people. The very necessary complement of the merely interested was never want-

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ing. One met beauty as well as brains; wealth as well as wit; and quite as many colourless nonentities as notoriety of every hue. The proportion was always perfect, but not more so than the general good-temper of the guests. They forgathered like long-lost brothers and sisters: the demagogue and the divine; the judge and the junior; the oldest lady and the newest woman; the amateur playwright and the actor-manager who had lost his play; the minor novelist and the young lady who had never heard of him; and my Lords and Ladies (whose carriages half-filled the Square) with the very least of these. It was wonderful to see them together; it was a solemn thought, but yet a fact, that their heavenly behaviour was due simply and entirely to the administrative genius of Lady Caroline Sellwood.

The Home Secretary hated the Wednesdays; he was the one person who did; and he only hated them because they *were* Wednesdays—and from the period of his elderly infatuation for golf. It was his great day for a round; and Lady Caroline had to make his excuses every week when it was fine. This was another thing which her ladyship did beautifully. She would say, with a voice full of sympathy, equally divided between those mutual losers, her guest and her husband, that poor dear George had to address such and such a tiresome deputation; when, as a matter of fact, he was 'addressing' his golf-ball on Wimbledon Common, and enjoying himself exceedingly. Now among other Wednesdays, the Home Secretary was down at Wimbledon (with a prominent member of the Opposition) on the afternoon following the arrival in London of the ninth Duke of St Osmund's; and Mr Sellwood never knew whether to pity his wife, or to congratulate himself, on his absence from her side on that occasion.

One of their constant ornaments, Claude Lafont, had been forced to eschew these Wednesdays of late weeks. Lady Caroline Sellwood had never been quite the same to him since the Easter recess. She had treated him from that time with a studied coolness quite inexplicable to his simple mind; and finally, at Lady Darlingford's, she had been positively rude. Claude, of course, had gone there expressly to prepare Lady Caroline for the new Duke. This he conceived to be his immediate duty, and he attempted to perform it in the kindest spirit imaginable, with all the tact at his command. Lady Caroline declined to hear him out. She chose to put a sinister construction upon his well-meant words, and to interrupt them with the announcement that she intended, with Claude's permission, to judge the Duke for herself. Was he married? Ha! then where was he to be found? Claude told her, was coldly thanked, and went home to writhe all that Tuesday night under the mortification of his kinswoman's snub.

Yet, on the Wednesday afternoon, Claude Lafont

not only went to the Sellwoods' as though nothing had happened, but he was there before the time. And Lady Caroline was not only amazed, but (for the first time since Easter) really pleased to see him: for already she had been given cause to regret her insolent disregard of him overnight at Lady Darlingford's. She was even prepared with an elaborate apology; but Claude's face prevented it; he was white with anxiety.

'Have you seen him?' he cried, even as the door opened.

'The Duke?'

'Yes—this morning?'

'No, indeed! Haven't you?'

Claude sat down with a groan, shaking his head, and never seeing the glittering, plump, outstretched hand.

'Haven't you?' repeated Lady Caroline, sitting down herself.

'Not this morning. I made sure he was here!'

'So he ought to have been. I asked him to lunch. The note was written and posted the instant we came in from the Darlingfords'. Claude, I wasn't nice to you there! Can you forgive me? I thought you were prejudiced. My dreadful temper rose in arms on the side of the absent man; it always was my great weakness rightly or wrongly to take the part of those who aren't there to stick up for themselves!'

Her great weakness was of quite another character; but Claude bowed. He was barely listening.

'I've lost him,' he said, looking at Lady Caroline with a rolling eye. 'He's disappeared.'

'Never!'

'This morning,' said Claude. 'I did so hope he was here.'

'He sent no answer; not one word; and he never came. Who saw him last?'

'The hotel people, early this morning. It seems he ordered a horse for seven o'clock, shortly after I left him last night. So they got him one, and off he went before breakfast in the flannel collar and the outrageous bush wideawake in which he landed. And he's never come back!'

A change came over Lady Caroline. She drew her chair a little nearer, and she favoured Claude Lafont with a kindlier glance than he had had from her since the Easter recess.

'Something may have happened!' whispered Lady Caroline hopefully.

'That's just it! Something *must* have happened.'

'But something dreadful! Only last season there was a man killed in the Row! Was he—a very rough diamond, Claude?'

'Very.'

Lady Caroline sighed complacently.

'But you can't help liking him,' hastily added Claude, 'and I hope to goodness nothing serious is the matter!'

'Of course, so do I. That goes without saying.'

'Nor is he at all a likely man to be thrown. He has lived his life in the saddle. By the way, he brought his own old bush-saddle with him, and

it appears that he insisted on riding out in that too!

'You see, Claude, it's a pity you didn't leave him in the bush; he's evidently devoted to it still.'

'He is: that's the trouble: he has already spoken of bolting back there. My fear is that he may even now be suiting the action to the word.'

'Don't tell me that,' said Lady Caroline, whose head was still full of her first theory.

'It's what I fear; he's just the sort of fellow to go back by the first boat, if the panic took him. He showed signs of a panic last night. You see, he's only just beginning to realise what his position here will mean. And it frightens him; it may have frightened him out of our sight once and for all.'

Lady Caroline shook her head.

'My belief is that he has broken his neck! And if he has, depend upon it, sad as it would be, it would still be for the best. That's what I always say: everything is for the best,' repeated Lady Caroline, pensively gazing at Claude's handsome head. 'However,' she added, as the door opened again, 'here's Olivia; go and ask her what she thinks. I think the worst. And pray stop, dear Claude, and let us talk the matter over after the others have gone. We may *know* the worst by that time. And we have seen nothing of you this season!'

Olivia looked charming. She was also kind to Claude. But she entirely declined to embrace her mother's dark view of the Duke's disappearance; on the other hand, she was inconveniently inquisitive about his looks and personality; and Claude had to say many words for his cousin before he could get in one for himself. However, he did at length contrive to speak of his new volume of poems. It was just out. He was having a copy of the exceedingly limited large paper edition specially bound in vellum for Olivia's acceptance. Olivia seemed pleased, and Claude had not felt so happy for weeks. They were allowed to talk to each other until the rooms began to fill.

It was a very good Wednesday; but then the season was at its height. The gathering comprised the usual measure of interesting and interested persons, and the former had made their names upon as many different fields as ever. Claude had a chat with his friend, Edmund Stubbs, a young man with an unhealthy skin and a vague reputation for immense cleverness. They spoke of the poems. Stubbs expressed a wish to see the large paper edition, which was not yet for sale, as did Ivor Llewellyn, the Impressionist artist, who was responsible for the 'decorations' in most volumes of contemporary minor verse, Claude's included. Claude was injudicious enough to invite both men to his rooms that night. The Impressionist was the most remarkable-looking of all Lady Caroline's guests. He wore a curled fringe and a flowing tie, and pince-nez attached to his person by a broad black ribbon. His pale face was prematurely drawn, and he showed his gums in a deathly grin at the many hard things which Stubbs muttered at the expense of all present whom he knew by sight. Claude had a high opinion of both these men; but for once he was scarcely in tune for their talk, which was ever at a sort of artistic-intellectual

concert-pitch. The Duke was to be forgotten in the society of Olivia only. Claude therefore edged away, trod on the skirts of a titled divorcée, got jammed between an Irish member and a composer of comic songs, and was finally engaged in conversation by the aged police-magistrate, Sir Joseph Todd.

Sir Joseph had lowered his elephantine form into a chair beside the tea-table, where he sat, with his great cane between his enormous legs, munching cake like a schoolboy and winking at his friends. He winked at Claude. The magistrate had been a journalist, and a scandalous Bohemian, so he said, in his young days; he had given Claude introductions and advice when the latter took to his pen. He, also, inquired after the new book, but rather grimly, and expressed himself with the rough edge of his tongue on the subject of modern 'poets' and 'poetry': the inverted commas were in his voice.

'You young spring poets,' said he, 'are too tender by half; you're all white meat together. You may say that's no reason why I should have my knife in you. Why didn't you say it? A bad joke would be a positive treat from you precious young fellows of to-day. And you give us bad lyrics instead, in limited editions; that's the way it takes you now.'

Claude laughed; he was absurdly good-humoured under hostile criticism, a quality of which some of his literary friends were apt to take advantage. On this occasion, however, his unconcern was partly due to inattention. While listening to his old friend he was thinking still of the Duke.

'I'm sorry you would be a poet, Claude,' the magistrate continued. 'The price of poets has gone down since my day. And you'd have done so much better in the House—by which, of course, I mean the House we all thought you were bound for. Has he—has he turned up yet?'

'Oh yes; he's in England,' replied Claude, with discretion.

Sir Joseph pricked his ears, but curbed his tongue. Of all the questions that gathered on his lips, only one was admissible, even in so old a friend as himself.

'A family man?'

'No; a bachelor.'

'Capital! We shall see some fun, eh?' chuckled Sir Joseph, gobbling the last of his last slice. 'What a quarry—what a prize! I was reminded of him only this morning, Claude. I had an Australian up before me—a most astounding fellow! An escaped bushranger, I should call him; looked as if he'd been cut right out of a penny dreadful; never saw such a man in my life. However'—

Claude was not listening; his preoccupation was this time palpable. The mouth of him was open, and his eyes were fixed; the police-magistrate followed their lead, with double eye-glasses in thick gold frames; and then *his* mouth opened too.

Her guests were making way for Lady Caroline Sellwood, who was leading towards the tea-table, by his horny hand, none other than the ninth Duke of St Osmund's himself. Her Ladyship's face was radiant with smiles; yet the Duke was just as he had been the day before, as unkempt, as undressed (his Crimean shirt had

a flannel collar, but no tie), as round-shouldered ; with his nose and ears still flayed by the sun ; and the notorious wideawake tucked under his arm.

'He has come straight from the bush,' her Ladyship informed everybody (as though she meant some shrub in the Square garden), 'and just as he is. I call it so sweet of him ! You know you'll never look so picturesque again, my dear Duke !'

Olivia followed with the best expression her frank face could muster. Claude took his cousin's hand in a sudden hush.

'Where in the world have you been ?' broke from him before them all.

'Been ? I've been run in,' replied my Lord Duke, with a smack of his bearded grinning lips.

'Tea or coffee, Duke ?' said Lady Caroline, all smiling tolerance. 'Tea ? A cup of tea for the Duke of St Osmund's. And *where* do you say you have been ?'

'Locked up !' said his Grace. 'In choky, if you like it better !'

Lady Caroline herself led the laugh. The situation was indeed worthy of her finely tempered steel, her consummate tact, her instinctive dexterity. Many a grander dame would have essayed to quell that incriminating tongue. Not so Lady Caroline Sellwood. She took her Australian wild bull very boldly by the horns.

'I do believe,' she cried, 'that you are what we have all of us been looking for—in real life—all our days. I do believe you are the shocking Duke of those dreadful melodramas in the flesh at last ! What was your crime ? Ah ! I've no doubt you cannot tell us !'

'Can I not ?' cried the Duke, as Claude stopped him, unobserved, from pouring his tea into the saucer. 'I'll tell you all about it. And perhaps you'll show me where the crime comes in, for I'm bothered if I see it yet. All I did was to have a gallop along one of your streets ; I don't even know which street it was ; but there's a round clearing at one end, then a curve, and then another clearing at the far end.

'Regent Street,' murmured Claude.

'That's the name. Well, it was quite early, there was hardly anybody about, so I thought surely to goodness there could be no harm in a gallop ; and I had one from clearing to clearing. Blowed if they didn't run me in for that ! They kept me locked up all the morning. Then they took me before a fat old joker who did nothing much but wink. That old joker, though, he let me off, so I've nothing agen' *him*. He's a white man, he is. So here I am at last, having got your invitation to lunch, ma'am, just half an hour ago !'

Sir Joseph Todd had been making fruitless efforts to rise, unaided, from his chair ; he now caught Claude's arm, and simultaneously, the eye of the Duke.

'Jumping Moses !' roared Jack ; 'why, there he is ! I beg your pardon, mister ; but who'd have thought of finding you here ?'

'That's good !' muttered Edmund Stubbs, in the background, to his friend the Impressionist. 'I've seen the lion and the lamb lie down here together before to-day. But nothing like this !'

The Impressionist whipped out a pencil and bared a shirt-cuff. No one saw him. All eyes were upon the Duke and the magistrate, who were shaking hands.

'You have paid me a valuable compliment,' croaked Sir Joseph gaily. 'Of course I winked ! Hadn't I my Lord Duke's little peccadillo to wink at ?'

And he bowed himself away under cover of his little joke, which also helped Lady Caroline enormously. The Duke mentioned the name by which he would go down to posterity on a metropolitan charge-sheet. Most people resumed their conversation. A few still laughed. And the less seriously the whole matter was taken the better, of course, for all concerned, particularly the Duke. Olivia had him in hand now. And her mother found time to exchange a few words with Claude Lafont.

'A dear fellow, is he not ? So natural ! Such an example in that way to us all ! How many of us would carry ourselves as well—in our bush garments ?' speculated her Ladyship, for the benefit of more ears than Claude's. Then her voice sank and trembled. 'Take him away, Claude,' she gasped below her breath. 'Take him away !'

'I intend to,' he whispered, nodding, 'when I get the chance.'

'But not only from here ; from town as well. Carry him off to the Towers ! And when you get him there, for Heaven's sake keep him there, and take him in hand, and we will all come down in August to see what you have done.'

'I'm quite willing, of course ; but what if he isn't ?'

'He will be. You can do what you like with him ! I have discovered that already ; he asked at once if you were here, and said how he liked you. Claude, you are so clever and so good ! If any one can make him presentable, it is you !' She was wringing her white hands whiter yet.

'I'll do my best, for all our sakes. I must say I like my material.'

'Oh, he's a dear fellow !' cried Lady Caroline, dropping her hands and uplifting her voice once more. 'So original—in nothing more than in his moral courage—his superiority to mere conventional appearances ! That is a lesson'—

Lady Caroline stopped with a little scream. In common with others, she had heard the high shrill mewing of a kitten ; but cats were a special aversion of her Ladyship's.

'What was that ?' she cried, tugging instinctively at her skirts.

'Meow !' went the shrill small voice again ; and all eyes fastened upon the Duke of St Osmund's, whose ready-made coat-tails were moving like a bag of ferrets.

The Duke burst into a hearty laugh, and diving in his coat-tail pocket, produced the offending kitten in his great fist. Lady Caroline Sellwood took a step backward ; and because she did not lead it, there was no laugh this time from her guests ; and because there was no laugh but his own, the Duke looked consciously awkward for the first time. In fact, it was the worst moment yet ; the next, however, Olivia's pink palms were stretched out for the kitten, and Olivia's laughing voice was

making the sweetest music that ever had gladdened the heart of the Duke.

'The little darling!' cried the girl, with genuine delight. 'Let me have it, do!'

He gave it to her without a word, but with eyes that clung as fast to her face as the tiny claws did to her dress. Olivia's attention was all for the kitten; she was serenely unconscious of that devouring gaze; but Claude saw it, and winced. And Lady Caroline saw it too.

'Poor mite!' pursued Olivia, stroking the bunch of black fur with a cheek as soft. 'What a shame to keep it smothered up in a stuffy pocket! Are you fond of cats?' she asked the Duke.

'Am I not! They were my only mates up the bush. I brought over three besides the kitten.'

'You brought them from the bush?'

'I did so!'

Olivia looked at him; his eyes had never left her; she dropped hers, and caressed the kitten?

'I put that one in my pocket,' continued the Duke, 'because I learned Livingstone to ride in front of me when he was just such another little 'un. But he'd done a bolt in the night; I found him just now with his three working paws black with your London soot; but he wasn't there when I got up, so I took the youngster. P'raps it wasn't over kind. It won't happen again. He's yours!'

'The kitten?'

'Why, certainly.'

'To keep?'

'If you will! I'd be proud!'

'Then I am proud. And I'll try to be as kind to it as you would have been.'

'You're uncommon kind to me,' remarked the Duke irrelevantly. 'So are you all,' he added, in a ringing voice, as for once he drew himself up to his last inch, astonishing everybody with his height. 'I never knew that there were so many of you here—or I'd have kept away. I'm just as I stepped off of the ship; I went aboard pretty much as I left the bush; if you'll make allowances for me this time, it shan't happen again. You don't catch me twice in a rig like this! Meanwhile, it's very kind of you all not to laugh at a joker. I'm much obliged to you. I am so. And I hope we shall know each other better before long!'

Claude was not ashamed of him then. There was no truer dignity beneath the ruffles and periwigs of their ancestors in the Maske picture-gallery than that of the rude, blunt fellow who could face modestly and yet kindly a whole roomful of well-dressed Londoners. It did not desert him as he shook hands with Lady Caroline and Olivia. In another moment the Duke was gone, and of his own accord, before he had been twenty minutes in the house. And what remained of that Wednesday afternoon fell flat and stale, always excepting the little formula with which Lady Caroline Sellwood sped her parting guests.

'Poor fellow,' it ran, 'he has roughed it so dreadfully in that horrible bush! You won't know him next time you see him. Yes, I assure you, he went straight on board at that

end and came straight to us at this! Not a day for anything in London or Melbourne. Actually not one day! I thought it so dear of him to come as he was; didn't you?'

And what could they say?

TO LULEA IN NORBOTTEN.

THE IRON MINES OF GELLIVARE.

By J. LOGIE ROBERTSON ('Hugh Haliburton').

A SUMMER voyage up the Baltic, to the utmost limit of its inland waters in far Haparanda, is as pleasant as a sail in springtime on the Mediterranean; and it has still the charm of novelty to recommend it, though it is doubtless destined to be much run upon in the immediate future. True, it cannot unfold so rich and varied a panorama of scenic loveliness as the coast of Southern Europe; and it is comparatively deficient in such historical attractions as draw all men to the classical shores of the Mediterranean. Yet in the Bothnian Gulf, under a typical Norland sky, one gazes into a wider, loftier, and serner expanse of heavens than overhangs the Levant, and there is, of course, in those higher latitudes, a longer luxury of light with a sweeter coming on of evening. The Baltic coast has also associations of its own, both of ancient and of modern history. Britons, at least, should find profound interest in memories of the Norsemen and of Nelson—something even of classical value in the Saga of *Beowulf* and in Campbell's heroic ballad of *The Battle of the Baltic*. It is, however, in its more invigorating effect upon the health that a Baltic voyage takes precedence of a sail in Southern waters. Are your nerves shattered? your eyes dim? Is your pulse languid? your appetite gone? Are you, in short, 'run down?' Here, on these inland waters of the North, you will be strengthened and quickened, brightened and braced. You will be borne, with scarcely a heave on the water, through successive baths of purest air and light, wholesome to the eyes, healing to the lungs, restful and refreshing to body and spirit! One difficulty there is before you can taste of these enjoyments, and it meets you at the outset; you must first cross the North Sea. This, it must be allowed, is a sufficiently nasty bit of water, when its fit of temper is on—quite equal to the creation of a racket which will challenge comparison with the turmoil

When winds are out on Biscay's sleepless bay.

But as soon as the Skaw comes in sight, you are at the gates of the Baltic, when your pleasures begin, and prove all the sweeter for the preliminary pain.

Many lines of traffic converge upon Elsinore, and you have the companionship of vessels of all kinds, till you find yourself between Stockholm and the entrance to the Gulf of Finland. From this point northwards to the head of the Norbotten Sea, you are naturally in less-frequented waters. What vessels you do pass or meet are mostly on the Swedish side; their cargo southwards is either wood or iron ore; northwards it is largely coal. But hour after hour may pass, with nothing above and nothing below but the sky and the water. If the weather be calm, your ear detects the slightest sounds—the lap of the water on the ship's side,

the low clacking of the engine with its reiterated rhythm, the 'ting' of the log register at the stern, the aerial laughter of a solitary seagull which persists in following the vessel for reasons of its own; but they only serve to accentuate the stillness. You turn in your hammock under the derrick with a renewed sense of indolent delight; or you toss aside the popular novel, which has ceased to interest you, for the placid pleasure of dreaming and dozing in a deck-chair. You might as well be in Mediterranean waters. But a breeze springs up from the north: it is cool and refreshing, without having the sting of the east in it. The surface of the water, smooth as glass before, has now a corded appearance, as of innumerable fine lines arranged in a regular wavy pattern; by-and-by white caps show on the distant waves that now begin to rise; the lapping play of water against the ship's side gives place to a brisk hissing sound; the gull has taken the water; you get up to taste the joys of activity—to pace the deck, or face the breeze on the bridge, or enjoy a chat at the door of the engine-room. Midnight comes, yet it is not by any means dark; the glow of the August sunset is still luminous to the northward; the wind has died away, and the air is soft and balmy.

The Baltic, including its great northern arm, the Gulf of Bothnia, is by no means a difficult sea to navigate; yet it is not without its dangers, which consist chiefly in the number of its rocks and shallows. Many soundings have yet to be taken; and not a season passes without the apparition of a stick where it was not looked for, moored to a weight, and marked, it may be, 'One fathom.' But with good charts and a careful lookout in familiar courses, the danger from shoal water is, in clear weather, at a low minimum; it is, of course, greatly increased by fogs. The season of fogs on the Baltic is from April to the end of June, with the chance of many a lovely day in the latter month, when the fog lifts, and leaves not a rack behind in the thin air; for the rest of the summer, onwards, indeed, to October, clear skies by day and night keep spanning those northern waters. Then comes a period of rain, and sleet, and snow; traffic falls rapidly away; at last the frost grips the Baltic, and holds at least its upper waters ice-bound for six months. The port of Lulea, which is already the principal town on the Baltic side of the Norrland of Sweden, and is probably destined in the near future to be one of the leading ports of Sweden, has this disadvantage, that it is closed to traffic for at least half the year. Last winter it became ice-bound on the 3d of November, and was not again free till well into May. The periods of opening and closing, however, show considerable variation. It is sometimes June till the port is clear of ice; and on the other hand it is sometimes even December ere the port is ice-bound for the winter. In 1886, for example, Lulea harbour, which opened to navigation on the 22d of May, closed so late as the 30th of November; in 1893 it opened so late as 2d June, and closed on 6th November.

Winter is more fiercely felt and lingers longer on the east coast of Sweden than in places of the same latitude on the west coast of Norway. The gracious influence of the Gulf Stream is scarcely, or not at all, extended to the Baltic shores. Thus it happens that Hammerfest is free while Lulea is yet locked in ice. It should also be noted that

there is less salt in the Baltic than in the main sea deep. Indeed, the water is practically fresh, eastwards and northwards, from the point where the great bifurcation of the Baltic proper, into the Gulfs of Finland and Bothnia, begins. The water of Lulea harbour is put to all the uses of fresh water: for washing, cooking, and drinking. One has only to remember the narrowness of its gateways—the two Belts and the Sound—by which the Baltic has communication with the ocean, and the vast quantity of fresh water poured into it from the innumerable lakes, and swamps, and snow plains of Finland and Lapland, to understand how the Baltic should be so much less salt than the North Sea. It is perhaps necessary to say that the non-saline nature of the waters of the Baltic is not without effect in navigation. A ship of, say, a thousand tons, loaded up to her marks, settles a good inch deeper in the fresh water than in the more buoyant waters of the briny ocean; and an inch more or less counts for something to the master of a sea-going Baltic trader, in a question of shoal water, more especially of artificial channels and harbour-bars. Another peculiarity of Baltic waters is the amount of lime they hold in solution. Practical evidence of this is well-known to engineers, in the incrustation which gathers thickly on the boilers of steamships plying regularly on those inland waters of the north. The abundance of calcareous rock in and around the Baltic is well-known to geologists. The large island of Gotland is based on a vast mass of limestone.

From the South Quarken, where the Gulf of Bothnia begins to narrow to half its previous width, the traffic seems to increase, gathered as it is within smaller compass. Here one may realise the quantity of deal battens, and boards, exported from Norbotten, from a view of the numerous schooners, barques, and steamships, laden almost to the last inch of freight, continually going south. The wood standards are piled far above the deck, in most instances to the level of the bridge in steamships, and not infrequently there is a list of the cargo to a degree which would prove dangerous in tidal waters. At the North Quarken the navigation of a vessel calls for special knowledge, and a pilot is taken on board at the fishing village of Rödkallen, about 17½ miles from Lulea, to guide the ship over shoal water among buoys and broomsticks through the channel which gives admission to Lulea harbour. This channel, Tjufholmsundet, which connects the capacious basin of a natural lagoon with the Baltic, was the work of several years, and since its completion, in the autumn of 1893, has already given such an impetus to the development of Lulea as a foreign shipping port, that its inhabitants are beginning to anticipate for Lulea equal rank with Malmö or Norrköping. The channel is through sand and rock for almost a mile, the depth is 23 feet, and the width with this depth 95. A tug is, of course, indispensable, and the passage is necessarily slow. It has already happened that the channel has been temporarily blocked by a sunken steamer. Once through the channel, even large vessels find ample room and verge enough to manœuvre and move freely in the commodious basin of Lulea harbour. The basin, about eight miles in length by four in breadth, has a depth of over 30 feet, which is

enters considerably increased, according as the wind checks the outflow by the channel. The harbour may fairly be described as excellent, and there are few of larger dimensions anywhere in Sweden. A statement of the various dues and charges levied upon ships entering the port may not be uninteresting. The charge for towage through the Tjufholmsundet varies, according to the size of the vessel, from about three to about five guineas; pilot dues, which are at present calculated on the vessel's draught of water, are to be regulated in future at so much per registered ton; lastage, a royal tax, of recent imposition, is at the rate of rather more than one penny per ton; light dues are at the rate of threepence a ton; dredging dues, one penny per ton; harbour dues, a halfpenny per ton; and tonnage dues, about a farthing per ton.

The advantages of Lulea as a shipping port are almost equalled by its commercial facilities on land. It has railway connection with Sweden, and with Lapland by means of the recently constructed route to the famous iron mines at Gellivare. It is no exaggeration to say that the discovery, and still more the construction of adequate means to utilise the discovery, of valuable and inexhaustible mines of iron ore at Gellivare, one hundred and twenty miles up-country to the north-west of Lulea, have given, within the last five or six years, a commercial importance to Lulea which it could never have obtained by any development of its traditional and time-honoured trade. As the port of shipment of Gellivare ore it has in a surprisingly brief period come into familiar notice among many of the ports and iron markets of western Europe, and the importance it has thus acquired has been beneficial to all its industries. There are now regular lines of steamers plying from and to Lulea, both Swedish and foreign. The general imports are coal, salt, and other articles of merchandise; the exports are mainly ore, timber, and tar. Over 23,000 tons of coal were imported in 1895, of which no inconsiderable quantity was from Fife pits, shipped at Methil and Burntisland. The exports of iron ore, in the same year, amounted to very close upon 400,000 tons; along with such a development of the old trade in tar and timber as is represented by 2500 barrels of the former, and 20,000 standards of the latter. The growth of the iron trade has been almost phenomenal. It began very modestly some eight or nine years ago with a few thousand tons. It is contended that last year's accounts will show that Lulea has out-rivalled Oxelsund, and doubled its own exports of ore of the previous year.

The mines, or rather the mountain mass of iron ore, at Gellivare have been known for many years: the yellowish-red scum, indicative of the presence of iron, has floated on the Lule-elf from time immemorial. So far back as 1860 attempts were made to utilise the discovery by the construction of canals which should connect the navigable parts of the Lule water as far up the river as Storbacken, from which place a railway was to be made to the iron mountain. These attempts, though persevered in for a while, fell through, and were not again renewed for several years. Now, however, there is railway communication the whole way, from Lulea to Gellivare, and long

mineral trains run daily from the mountain-side to the loading wharf, about half a mile distant from Lulea. To each mineral train are attached two or three carriages for passengers—but the traffic is essentially in goods. Each wagon contains 25 tons of ore, and the powerful hydraulic lift by which the mineral is raised to the 'shoots' takes up three wagons at one time. Loading thus goes on with despatch, and a thousand tons may easily be delivered into a ship's hold, from two 'shoots' working at once, in the course of a day. The charge for loading wood goods is considerable—from half-a-crown to three shillings per standard; but the delivery of ore is in general free, the goods being simply shot into the hold, a hanging target of iron only being employed to break the force of the metal as it leaves the shoot. The ore is of various qualities of excellence, the best class containing as much as ninety-eight per cent. of pure iron. Very much, if not most, of the iron ore of Gellivare obtains a ready market in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, whence it is transported to Germany, much of it finding its way to Krupp's works; but a considerable and increasing quantity goes to English foundries on Tees-side. There is, indeed, a pretty regular line of traffic in Gellivare ore now established between Lulea and Stockton. There is no export of iron from Lulea to France, a country which in other articles of merchandise has a steady connection with Norbotten land; but a ship's load, just sent on trial to Dunkirk while this is being written, may, it is hoped, be the means of stimulating French custom. The enterprise of the Company to whom the mines belong, and whose headquarters are in Lulea, is worthy of success, and is ably supported by the brothers Asplund—the elder of whom is British vice-consul at Lulea. It may be mentioned here that copper ore also, of promising quality and abundance, has just been discovered at Gellivare.

Lulea has more than doubled its population since its connection with Gellivare was completed. It now contains a resident and thriving population of about eight thousand. The Elf or Water, of the same name, at the mouth of which it stands on a spit of land that is almost insular, marks the ancient division between Sweden and Lapland. One may still observe, in the obscurer parts of the town, and especially among the dock labourers, faces and figures which are characteristic of a Lapp or Finnish origin; but the great majority of the inhabitants reveal the tall stature, free movement, fair hair and complexion, and frank, intelligent expression of the Swede. Even far inland, to the north of the Lule-elf, though you are closer upon the traces of the aboriginal possessors of the land, you cannot fail to see that the Swede has ousted the Lapp from the fairest and most fertile valleys, and relegated him to the rank and condition of a dependant. Nothing, perhaps, will show the enterprise of the inhabitants of Lulea so convincingly as the fact that the telephone and electric light are in general use. There are, besides, excellent hotels and good shops; Swedish baths, with peculiarities of their own; a West-end, well-built, well laid out, and with an air of repose and culture one hardly expects to find in so distant a nook of Northern Europe; the latest news from London, South Africa, Armenia, the Soudan; Burns's Poems,

and his picture, in the booksellers'; sewing-machines in every house, even side by side with the primitive spinning-wheel and hand-loom in the houses of the peasantry; bicycles on the unpaved streets; Scotch whisky; tropical fruit; and the English language, in a town where Britons are rare, pretty generally understood and even spoken. Besides Britain, such other European states as Denmark, Russia, Germany, Holland, France, Spain, and Portugal are represented by vice-consuls.

Seen from the harbour, Lulea gives one the impression of a new and singularly clean town, to which the large spick-and-span church, a recent erection, picked out with red and white bricks, on a knoll in the centre of the town, largely contributes. Away from the town, on the north, west, and south sides, you descry nothing but low rocks and hills of no commanding height, covered sparsely with dark-green pines of small and even stunted stature. If you enter those woods, which cover the whole country for miles around, except where a small clearance has been made for a patch of rye, or grass, or potatoes, you are oppressed with their silence; for here, owing probably to the absence of flies, there is an absence of birds, almost total, indeed, but for the occasional glimpse of a wagtail balancing himself on a stone in a brook, or flitting around the wheel of a sawmill. But if song-birds are absent, blackberries and such humble fruit as 'the kind hospitable woods provide' are fairly abundant, and apparently left to waste. The tinkle of a cow-bell, and the song of a solitary woodman are the only sounds to be heard in a Swedish forest in summer. There is more life and gaiety on the water. The farms are on the river-sides, each stead, orgaard, marked out in the distance by its own oriental-looking well-sweep; and it is safe to say that there is no farmer without a boat or two, which every child or woman can manage with ease. Rowing and singing on the Lule are inseparable exercises; and, however it may originate, the songs of Sweden are of a tone plaintive and sombre enough to pass for hymn tunes, especially in those secluded parts of the country which border on, or are beyond, the Arctic circle. To a liking for song the Swedish peasant unites a love of poetry; and it was of no little interest to a Scotsman to find in August of last year, on a rustic inn table at Svartla, two days' journey inland from Lulea, the echo of Scottish rejoicings over Burns, and a rendering of 'A man's a man for a' that' for the Swedes and Lapps of far Norbotten, a verse of which may be given here:

Ej höfs det redligt armod vill,
Slä blicken ned — och alt det;
Vi ga forbi en sadan träl,
Vi trotsa armod — alt det!
Och alt det, och als det
Vart stand ar ligt, och alt det;
Men rang ar myntets pragel blott,
Och mannen guld, trots alt det!

There is excellent fishing for salmon and trout on the Lule; and the scenery, from the rapids at Hedensfors, to the falls at Edefors and Jockmock, is always pleasing, and sometimes touched with sublimity. At Svartla the river has a width equal to three times that of the Tay at the North Inch of Perth, and is traversed for many miles,

both up and down, by small steamers, which do a brisk trade, and convey a small but motley throng of passengers during the summer. There is one handsome town on the Lule, Boden by name, for which even a more brilliant future is anticipated than for Lulea. As yet its rather ambitious hotel and its capacious church are the only visible points of interest to a visitor. The railway from Lulea to Boden was made by an English firm, and for some time worked by an English company. It was at last taken over by the Swedish government, and incorporated with the state railways.

A CHILD OF TONKING.

CHAPTER III.

AN existence more peculiar than that upon which the baby then entered, one would have had to go a long way to discover. Indeed, a student of human nature would have found ample material for study in the fact of his being in the fort at all. The effects of his presence were generally felt in the regiment, though they differed widely in their natures. The idea of Black Rat and Long Jean turning wet-nurses was at first considered in the light of a stupendous joke, which called for proper and peculiar treatment. But this ridicule died an early death, when the two foster-fathers had thrashed at least a quarter of the regiment for their gibes, and showed that they were prepared to begin upon the balance, as soon as it was necessary. In my mind it is open to doubt whether the child would really have taken such a hold upon the two men had they not been called upon to do battle on his behalf. On the principle that what is worth fighting for is worth cherishing, they soon found themselves becoming devotedly attached to the chubby mite, who ate out of the same mess-kid with them, shared their beds, and their idle hours. To see Black Rat seated in the shadow of the barrack wall hard at work with needle and thread upon a second garment for the child, his face puckered with anxious thought, was to understand something of his feelings. His whole care was centred upon the work in hand, though he had still a watchful eye for the spot hard by, where Long Jean, with a face whose gravity would also have become a *Juge d'instruction*, was engaged in teaching the child to walk. By the time he had been in their care a month, he was able to go anywhere alone, and there were few places in the whole circle of the fort into which he had not penetrated. It is even said that on one occasion he marched boldly into the orderly room itself, and seeing, seated in a chair before the table, a tall, gray-moustached individual wearing a uniform, took him for one of his own comrades, and demanded to be lifted on to his knee, quite regardless of the fact that he wore no clothing save a caricature of a shirt. The colonel, for he it was, was a childless man; and Little Pierre, who was standing sentry at the door, afterwards affirmed that, when he put the child down from his lap, it was with a heavy sigh.

From that day forward Tata was free of the whole fortress; and there was scarcely a man of all the rascals the walls contained who would not have given his life to save the little one from harm. Black Rat and Long Jean, however, came first in his affections, as was only fit and proper, the colonel next, his cook fourth, and after that the balance of the regiment taken as a whole. But there was one person whose acquaintance he had yet to make, and an evil day it was when he came into her presence.

One morning, when parade was at an end, consternation reigned in the fort. Search as they would, the baby was not to be found. Nearly beside themselves with fear, Black Rat and Long Jean hunted high and low, assisted by at least a third of the regiment, in the barrack rooms, in the cook-shops, in the canteen, in the orderly room, in the armourer's quarters, and even in the guard-house at the gate, but without success. Not a trace of him could be discovered. It was not until nearly mid-day and the whole regiment had become semi-mutinuous that Céleste, the maid in the service of the colonel's wife, put in an appearance in the barrack square leading him by the hand. He had been in the commandant's quarters all the time, where the colonel's wife had fed him with *chocolate nougat* to repletion. For the remainder of the day he was unwell, as may be easily supposed.

Next morning Black Rat was summoned to the colonel's residence. Such an honour had never been conferred upon him before, and he was apprehensive as to what the reason of it might be. That it had something to do with Tata he felt morally certain, but the real truth never for a moment dawned upon him.

He found madame seated in a cane chair in the veranda. She was dressed altogether in white—a costume over which was spread some filmy diaphanous lace that gave her an almost ethereal appearance. Her fingers were literally covered with rings, her complexion was as carefully prepared as if she were setting out for a walk upon the Boulevards. She was small, and had something of a Semitic cast of countenance. As Black Rat approached, her cunning little eyes gleamed maliciously under their delicately-pencilled brows.

Reaching the veranda, the soldier halted and saluted. He waited for her to speak. When she had surveyed him with an expression of disgust she did so.

'You have the charge of the little child who is now in the barracks?' she said. 'He was here yesterday.'

Black Rat intimated that he was aware of that fact, and, fearing the little one had got into some scrape, hastened to apologise for his intrusion. She cut him short.

'He is a nice child,' she said, 'and I have taken a fancy to him, and I wish to have him.'

'But, madame'—

'I want no "buts,"' she cried quickly. 'How you obtained possession of him I do not wish to inquire. It is enough that I am sufficiently pleased with him to desire to adopt him.'

Black Rat was so overcome with astonishment that for a moment he could not answer. When he did, it was with the utmost deference that he said:

'I regret, madame, that what you propose is impossible.'

'Impossible,' she cried. 'You dare to use that word to me? Do you know that I am your commandant's wife?'

'I am aware of that,' he answered gravely.

'Then be careful that I do not speak to him of your insolence. Now go, and let the child be brought to me within half-an-hour. As soon as I receive him, you shall have fifty francs to spend at the canteen.'

Rough and hard as Black Rat was, and inured to every sort of treatment, the insolence and cruelty of this speech stung him like the lash of a whip. He could have found it in his heart to have sprung into the veranda, and have taken that white slim throat between his grizzled fingers. That done, he would only have to put forth a flea-bite of his strength, and she would be as dead as the burnt-up grass upon which he was now standing. He controlled himself, however, with an effort, and reiterated his former decision, 'The child is not for sale.'

'The price is not high enough, you mean?' she cried, and struck a silver bell upon the table at her side. When it was answered by her maid, Céleste, she bade her find her purse in a certain drawer and bring it to her. This received, she took from it a quantity of gold, which she spread out upon her hand, saying as she did so:

'There is twice the amount. Take it and bring the child to me.'

'I regret to have to refuse you, madame,' said the other; 'but I must repeat my former assertion: the child is not for sale.'

'*Cochon*,' she cried, stamping her foot angrily upon the floor, 'you shall smart for this behaviour. Listen to me. If you do not let me have the baby within half-an-hour, you will make an enemy of me, and then you were better dead. Be off, and think twice before you say "no." I will give you to the evening to decide.'

Black Rat saluted respectfully, and departed to describe what had occurred to his comrades in the barrack-room. Many were the imprecations hurled at the head of the colonel's wife, while the child's foster-fathers vowed more vehemently than ever that under no provocation whatever would they consent to let the infant go. That this resolve would involve them in serious trouble not one of them doubted. But such was the importance of the stake at issue that they were prepared to risk anything rather than to give in. It was a semi-mutinuous regiment that went upon parade that evening.

The colonel's wife was of a vindictive nature, and when she discovered that the men did not intend to comply with her demand she was not slow to retaliate. Through one of the company officers, who was her own special *protégé*, she managed to make Black Rat's life a burden to him. Whenever there was a dangerous bit of work to be executed, an unpleasant duty to be performed, or an opportunity for personal enjoyment to be stopped, he was invariably made the victim. His character was sufficiently bad in itself to allow of endless chances being found, and in every case they were made the most of. In the meantime little Tata revolved in his humble orbit, made dust pies in the barrack square, criticised the troops on parade from the vantage

point of the canteen counter, and by his thousand and one mannerisms and loving little ways, had endeared himself to the hearts of all who came in contact with him. By the time he had been six months in the fort he had developed into a chubby little god, the colour of a dark walnut shell, and had come to be considered quite part and parcel of the regimental life. Once when he was taken ill with some juvenile ailment, and was seriously indisposed for three days, such a gloom was cast over the community that the colonel scarcely recognised his men.

Little as any one expected it, a change was imminent. The mail, which only reached that desolate station once in every two months, brought a despatch for the commandant, ordering him to relinquish his command, and to proceed with all haste to Haiphong, where a new post had been discovered for him. It was a rise in the world, and filled him with satisfaction, for he had been a comparatively unsuccessful man so far. The evening meal had just been eaten in the barracks when the news reached them, and the thunderous applause with which it was received reached the colonel and his wife as they sat in their veranda waiting for dinner.

'What is the matter over yonder?' he asked of his adjutant, who was approaching.

'The men are pleased at your news, sir,' the other replied.

'The good fellows,' said the colonel, who was much touched by the show of sympathy.

Had he known the real state of the case, I doubt if either he or his wife would have felt so much flattered.

The next three days were spent in active preparation for departure. The commanding officer and his lady were to travel by land, the river being considered dangerous at this time of year. An escort of half-a-dozen men would accompany them, and for a short time Black Rat and Long Jean went about their duties in fear and trembling lest they might be included in the number. Their fears, however, were soon set at rest.

On the morning preceding the commandant's departure Black Rat was once more summoned to madame's presence. He was giving the child his morning tub at the time, but as soon as he was informed that he was wanted he surrendered him to Long Jean, who as a general rule was considered too clumsy to be entrusted with such a delicate business, and, with the recollection of the child's wet, healthy little body and the pretty picture he had presented in his bath in his mind, departed on his errand. The colonel's wife received him in the middle of her packing. There was a soft purring gentleness about her this morning that the other felt to be more dangerous than her rage.

'Good morning,' she said affably, 'you see how busy I am; to-morrow we go away. I have sent for you because I feel sure you have by this time reconsidered your decision with regard to the child. My last offer is still open, and when I tell you that I will do everything in my power to make the little one happy, to educate him, and to bring him up as if he were my own, I know you will not say me nay.'

'I regret, madame, that I cannot change my decision,' said Black Rat gravely. 'As I have told you before, I cannot let the baby go.'

Still she maintained her good temper. Only there was a nasty look in her eyes now that the other did not like.

'Come, come,' she said, 'you must not treat me so. Think of the little one himself; remember his future. If you are as fond of him as they say, surely you would like to give him a good chance in life.'

'It is impossible that I can let you have him.'

'Major Pellay, who will be your commanding officer after to-morrow, is a friend of mine, and they tell me there is a vacancy for a corporal. Give me the child, and I will undertake that you get the position.'

The temptation was a great one, particularly to a man who had always been kept down at the bottom of the ladder. But he was not to be bribed.

'You do not understand,' he said. 'I cannot let you have the little one.'

She could not keep her temper under control a moment longer. So turning upon him a face of fury, she cried:

'Then you shall regret it to the last hour you live. So far your life has not been honey; in the future, if you refuse me, I'll take care that it shall be vinegar. Will you let me have the child?'

'I cannot.'

'Then go.'

She pointed with her finger in the direction of the barracks, her face almost livid with rage. He left her and returned to his quarters, fully convinced in his own mind that she would carry out her threat. But still Tata was saved from her, and that was better than anything.

HERON-HUNTING ON THE WANKS.

By ROWLAND W. CATER,

Author of *Out with the India-rubber Gatherers*.

EARLY in April 1892 I arrived at Cape Gracias á Dios on board a small trading schooner, with the intention of making a trip up the Wanks River. Rumour said that the natives had not been spoiled—from the trader's point of view—by too frequent intercourse with white men, and that very profitable business might be done.

For the enlightenment of those to whom the Wanks is a mere geographical expression, I must explain that this stream, which is also known as the Coco and the Segovia, forms the boundary between Nicaragua and Honduras, and empties itself into the Atlantic at the cape already mentioned on the Mosquito Coast.

My hope on landing was to obtain a dug-out and crew of Mosquito Indians, about the best canoe men in the world, whether belonging to the Rama, Woolwa, Cookra, or Tonga tribes, or King-men—as they were sometimes called when they had a king—that is, Mosquitos proper. Failing those, a crew of Caribs, descendants of the ancient inhabitants of the Caribbean coast and their African mates, would have served my turn. But fortune compelled me to hire a dug-out, manned by four vagabond Sambos, one quarter Indian, the rest Jamaica negro, with all the vices of both races, and very few of their virtues. They were just

recovering from a debauch, which, however, had failed to satisfy them, judging by the jicara gourds, full of Coyoil wine, or Cassava, or *aguardiente*, which they stowed away in the boat. However, as remonstrance would have been useless, I said nothing, and we set out up the river, which at the mouth is about five hundred yards wide. Swampy banks lined with cocoa-nut palms may be interesting when seen for the first time, but both are features of most of the rivers on the Mosquito Coast, and I had journeyed up many of them. Consequently, I judged it more profitable, bearing in mind the company I was in, to look to my arms, a Winchester rifle and a forty-four calibre Colt's revolver, rather than at the scenery. Withdrawing the cartridges, I reloaded both carefully, while my rascally crew, sitting with their backs towards me, vigorously plied their *canaletes*—paddles shaped like spoons. At mid-day I took a turn to relieve Jim, the woolly-headed cook, but I was very glad when he declared the meal ready.

As we proceeded the vegetation became more and more varied. I saw a 'bread-fruit tree'—*Fruta de pan*—forty to fifty feet high, with long glossy leaves of dark green, and clusters of yellowish marrow-like fruit at the ends of the branches; many pita plants, a species of agave, very valuable for its fibre; *Madera de Nicaragua*, resembling Brazil wood, and often so called; avocado pear trees, mangoes, and even wild oranges and cacao. Ceibas or silk-cotton trees we frequently passed, with here and there a cedar one hundred feet high or more, or a mahogany, easily identified by its enormous dome of light green foliage. Cabbage palms with yellow stems, and long narrow pale-green leaves, springing from the edible, vase-shaped cone which gives the tree its name, stood in battalions; and there were many corozo palms, whose oily nuts provide us with the vegetable ivory of commerce, interspersed with clumps of bamboo and wild sugar-cane.

Most of the old trees were wreathed in creepers, vanilla and other orchids, Tacsonias, and the so-called moss, like long gray beards—a *Tillandsia*—so characteristic of Central American scenery.

Nor was animal life wanting. White herons, of which more anon, waded in the shallows, or rose fluttering and beating the air from sandspits. When we approached either bank, iguanas eyed us warily from the branches above; armadillos clattered from the water-side, or rolled themselves into a ball; alligators lay like logs on the surface in the deeper, more sluggish reaches. Parrots and paroquets in couples, screaming macaws, toucans and trogons crossed the stream; and now and then I caught a glimpse of a striated monkey, little larger than a squirrel, seated among the boughs.

At sunset my men paddled to the right-hand bank, and made the dug-out fast to a shrub. Ten minutes after supper all four were sound asleep and snoring like a herd of javalinos, each on his thwart just where he had sat. Finding the music none too agreeable, I presently picked up a blanket and my rifle, and sprang ashore. The undergrowth grew sparsely there, so curling up beneath a huge cedar, I also was soon asleep, despite the attacks of a swarm of mosquitoes which had smelt the blood of a white man, and were even more troublesome than usual.

Awaking soon after dawn, I rose and looked round. The river was wrapped in mist. Save for the chattering of numberless birds and the ripple of the strong current, all was very still. 'Hallo!' I shouted, to arouse the boatmen. There was no response. I strode to the water's edge, where the dug-out had been moored. There was no boat either. The rascally Sambos had disappeared. So had my baggage and provisions. Fortunately I had a rifle, revolver and machete, a supply of ammunition, and my money, which I carried in a belt.

Presently I noticed that a branch of the shrub to which the dug-out had been tied was stripped of its leaves, as if the rope had been pulled over it. It was feasible that the strong current had wrenched the boat from its moorings, and that the Sambos were less dishonest than I had imagined. To guide them in case they should be returning, I fired shots, and shouted at ten-minute intervals for two hours, with no result. Then the question arose whether I should push on up the stream, or return to Cape Gracias á Dios. For aught I knew, my men might have been carried back over the bar and into the Caribbean Sea before they awoke. A hard day's toil following a drunken orgie would make them sleep sound enough for anything. Two days' journey from the river's mouth I knew there was an Indian settlement, and as it would be no more difficult to go forward than to turn back, I decided on the former course.

Except for an open space of only too small dimensions here and there, the forest and undergrowth closed in on the river like a wall. To get along was impossible without cutting a path through the bushes and creepers. The speed of a boat against that swift stream would not be great, but I calculated that it must be quite four times as fast as my progress, and that, consequently, I should be four days in reaching the nearest settlement. However, there was no help for it, and I slashed away, keeping as near the river as I could. Fortunately I had the Wanks to guide me, and therefore I was not in serious danger of the terrible fate which too often waits upon the inexperienced traveller lost in the woods.

The situation of such an unfortunate is more bewildering and perilous than the stay-at-home Englishman can easily conceive. As the hours pass, he grows more and more confused, and thinking he recognises every object he sees, he rushes frantically on, half hoping, half despairing, often in a circle that ever widens, ever leads him farther from the track, until at last he falls exhausted and sleeps like a dead man. In this condition the prowling jaguar or puma finds him, and watches with eyes that burn like coals of fire. After a while the wearied fellow moves restlessly or calls out in his slumber. Instantly a roar reverberates through the misty forest, there is a mighty spring, a savage worrying, and all is over. Better a thousand times, however, a speedy death by the blow of a wild beast than to be eaten alive by hordes of ravenous insects, which has been the end of many a brave man lost in a jungle of the tropics.

Having no mind for either fate, I pushed forward, satisfying my hunger from time to time with such fruits as I recognised, chiefly cashew nuts and wild pine-apples, as I found them. An

hour before sundown I halted to build a hut and collect fuel for a fire to scare off a possible *tigre*—as the natives call the jaguar—or *leon* (puma). When the rude *ramada* was ready for occupation, I set the great pile of sticks alight, lay down, and quickly fell asleep. The fire had dwindled down to a heap of white ashes when I awoke, but the dawn was approaching, and I did not trouble to replenish it.

The incidents of my second day's journey resembled those of the first so closely that to write them down would be mere recapitulation. However, as I had found astringent cashew nuts and wild pine-apples very unsustaining, I shot a brace of green parrots for dinner, and again for supper. Roasted over the fire, they were excellent eating for a hungry man.

During the morning of the third day I was led astray several times by the paths of cattle seeking water—deer, *cimarron* (wild horses), and possibly tapirs. I also narrowly avoided treading upon a snake, a *Campanilla*, said by the natives to be very venomous. Towards noon, to my great delight, I heard the welcome crook-crook of paddles. Bursting through the brushwood, I gained the river bank, and yelled as I had never done before.

'Hallo!' answered a voice. Next instant a big dug-out swept round a bend, urged by six Caribs. In the stern sat a white man—blessed sight! The boat approached and came to a stand.

'I guess you've been scared more'n a sample, mister?' said the stranger.

'Well,' I said, 'I've had enough of tramping through the woods, and I yelled in the hope that you would oblige me with a passage as far as the nearest settlement, where I can perhaps get another boat and crew. I lost mine three days ago.'

The American (I will call him Mr Brown) took me aboard at once and promptly set a good square meal before me. Afterwards, over a couple of excellent cigars—not made of native tobacco—we talked.

My rescuer was a trader, of course, bound for the Indian settlement in quest of gold, rubber, herons' feathers, or any other produce out of which a satisfactory profit might be made. He had seen nothing of a dug-out and crew on the river, but before starting he had met a couple of drunken Sambos in clean shirts, which I did not doubt had once formed part of my wardrobe. The outcome of our conversation was a limited partnership for that trip only. I agreed to defray half the cost of the boat and crew. Mr Brown undertook to convey myself and any produce I might purchase back to Cape Gracias a Dios.

I soon discovered that my new friend was a large exporter of herons' feathers, and that he hoped to secure a good haul in the upper waters of the Wanks. I knew something about the trade before I had the extreme pleasure of meeting him, but I must admit that he gave me a great deal of valuable information.

Those delicate articles of commerce are known in the city of London and among traders as osprey feathers, but that fish-hawk lacks any such adornment. I am unable to say how the misnomer obtained currency. Osprey feathers are procured from the White Heron, *Ardea egretta*, or *Ardea alba*, called *Garza blanca* by Spanish

Americans. The bird, like the other herons, is one of the Waders or Grallatores, and abounds on nearly all Central American rivers and lagoons as well as in the South, but it is perhaps most numerous on streams that empty into the Atlantic. To milliners, by whom they are greatly used, the plumes are known by the French term *aygrettes*.

From the point of the bill to the tip of the tail *Ardea egretta* measures about three feet. Its feathers are generally white, with a slight creamy tint. The marketable plumes are those of the crest, which are only found on the fully fledged male bird, and the tail feathers of both male and female. The crest feathers run from five to eight inches in length, and consist of very fine hair-like branches on a delicate tapering stem. They may often be purchased from the Indians at eight pesos the ounce, say sixteen shillings. In England the minimum price for selected plumes is seven pounds per ounce, so it will be seen that collecting herons' feathers is a very profitable occupation. But each ounce of crest feathers, comprising, when dry, from six hundred and fifty to eight hundred plumes, necessitates the slaughter of from twenty-five to thirty birds, victims to merciless fashion. Small feathers taken from the tails of young birds of both sexes are commonly mixed with those from the crest.

Next in value are the coarser tail feathers, from full-grown birds, which really spring from the heron's body where the wing pinions fold upon it. They measure from ten to fifteen inches long, and from thirty to forty may be obtained from each bird. Being larger and heavier than the crest plumes, fewer are required to make up an ounce, and the price is proportionately lower. The cost in Nicaragua is from four shillings and sixpence to six shillings and ninepence. In London two pounds per ounce may be realised.

My friend Brown, who had a small armoury of double-barrelled smooth-bores in the stern of the dug-out, kept a sharp watch for herons as we crept up against the current.

'It's pairing time, you see,' he said, 'and likely we'll scare a flock any minute if we ain't keeful. That'd be a pity, for they're in fine feather and looking their level best just now, I guess, as is as natural in birds as in humans. Keep your eyes skinned for the sentries, mister.'

I was aware that these birds, usually shy and solitary, congregate in great flocks just before and during the breeding season, which is May, and that when feeding, sentinels are posted on trees or elevations to give warning of the approach of an enemy. Often I had watched a heron sentry, standing half concealed in the surrounding vegetation, motionless, except at intervals when he stretched his long neck to see that all was safe.

'I suppose,' said I, 'you have heard that Indian yarn of the heron sentinels standing on one leg and holding a stone with the other when on duty at night?'

'That's so,' Brown answered. 'And it's likely true enough. Indians ain't liars when they've no reason for it. What do you opine, Sammy?'

'Neber see 'um, sah,' replied the Carib addressed, a huge fellow, more negro than Indian. 'I hear tell Garza hold stone to wake him up when he go asleep. Him shut eyes and nod, down drop stone—crash! Him wide awake dat minute.'

Whether the story is true or not, I am unable to say, but the following anecdote proves that the white heron is by no means stupid. A friend of mine at Greytown kept a tame one in his garden which he had obtained as a chick. He also owned a dog, whose delight it was to worry the bird, driving it to the house-top and keeping it there. One day the heron, not being so quick as usual, was seized by the dog and badly bitten, but contriving to escape, it flew away. Four months afterwards it returned in the company of three more of its kind. The four at once attacked the dog, piercing him with their sharp bills, and buffeting him with their wings. He made a good fight, but the herons battled warily, rising from the ground after each peck and waiting the opportunity for another. In the result, the dog lost an eye, his face was cut to ribbons, and he received such severe wounds about the body that he shortly died. All four of the victorious birds took to flight, but the tame one came back that evening with its mate, and both remained. The owner of the revengeful heron, who had been an eye-witness of the fight, identified it by two black feathers in the left wing, a very unusual marking.

That day we saw only a few stragglers, not one of which allowed us to get within gunshot; but soon after starting next morning, about seven o'clock, Sammy caught sight of a sentry perched in the top of a Ceiba. The men ceased paddling at once, and the boat drifted back behind a bend where we could make our dispositions unseen.

'You may bet your bottom dollar there's a flock feeding in the next reach,' said Mr Brown, 'but I calculate it won't be easy to get within range. If we was above them, we might drift down unheard, but we can't paddle up against this stream without making a noise—no, not if we muffle the paddles.'

Sammy suggested that he should land and examine the forest. It might be possible to get abreast of the herons without having to cut a path, especially if the belt of wood fringing the river were narrow, and, as is sometimes the case, a savannah lay behind it. In the end a Carib was put ashore on either bank with instructions to reconnoitre.

Sammy was first to return. He reported a savannah four hundred yards from the stream and stretching to the timber-fringed shore of a creek or lagoon.

'Dat whar Garzas feed, certain sure,' he said.

As soon as the other Carib came back, the dug-out was made fast in a thicket of reeds, and we set out for the savannah, each carrying a gun. If we could have approached the birds from both sides of the river simultaneously, our chances of a good haul would have been increased, but that was impossible. The forest was far too dense on the left bank. It would have been necessary to cut our way, and the clang of the machetes would have given the alarm. As it was, we had to tear a passage through the creepers; but on the savannah we could get along. Keeping well under cover of the straggling trees on the edge of the prairie, we soon reached the narrow belt of wood behind which lay the feeding ground. It proved to be intersected by numerous cattle tracks, paths to favourite drinking places. We at once separated, approaching the lagoon in couples from

different parts. I accompanied Mr Brown. When nearing the water we dropped on our hands and knees, and crept forward to the edge, which was screened by reeds and thick-bladed grass.

'I reckon we'll wait till one of the Caribs beyond lets fly,' my companion whispered. 'That'll drive the critturs this way.'

At first I could not see a bird. The lagoon was dotted over with clumps of reeds, rushes, and other aquatic plants. Presently, however, I made out a white crest and head above a thicket, then another and another.

A least a dozen herons stood within range of the gun Mr Brown had lent me, but so well concealed were they, so still, and so intent on their occupation, that it required a very experienced eye to make them out at a glance.

From time to time a white crest disappeared, and almost simultaneously a dusky yellowish bill showed above the reeds, transfixing or holding a fish. This gulped down, the successful bird resumed its former watchful attitude.

At length a shot rang out fifty yards farther along the lagoon. Instantly white fluttering bodies on stilt-like legs emerged from almost every sheltering thicket. Unable to take flight until sufficient momentum had been attained, the herons ran awkwardly, beating the water with their great concave wings, at the mercy of any decent marksman. I did not fire. It was not the sort of sport that I cared about; too much like murder, indeed. However, eleven herons fell before the survivors were able to rise and sail away, with their long legs sticking out in almost a straight line behind them.

When assured that the lagoon was connected with the river, Mr Brown sent four Caribs back for the dug-out. Meanwhile we plucked the valuable feathers from the victims, and hung them up by the quills to dry. Every bird had fallen into the water. The plumes, being dry when the boat arrived, were at once bunched, sprinkled well with powdered camphor, and wrapped in coarse brown paper containing a large percentage of mineral matter. The packets were then carefully wrapped in oil-cloth to protect their contents from ants and other insects, which, if they could obtain access, would eat off the fine hairs in a very short time, thus reducing the value in proportion to the damage done.

I asked Mr Brown if the Indians he dealt with ever loaded the feathers, that is, filled the hollow part of the quills with some weighty powder, kept from running out by a tiny plug of cotton from the silk-cotton tree.

'I guess they do now and again,' he answered, 'but that trick is more often tried on by traders who ought to know better. I recollect buying a nice little lot of loaded feathers from an Indian. He'd filled up the quills with gold-dust. You bet I didn't say a word. But that was a long time ago.'

So ended my first heron stalk. We had several more when we reached the Indian settlements, but none was so successful from the trader's point of view as that which I have endeavoured to describe. There were no more *battues*, for which I was thankful. I am sorry to say that Mr Brown, who was not hunting herons for the sake of sport, did not share my dislike of wholesale slaughter.

After a fortnight's stay with a tribe of friendly Sumu Indians, we returned with a small but valuable cargo of feathers, rubber, vanilla beans, skins, &c. I must not omit to mention that the dug-out also carried two parcels of gold-dust and nuggets, purchased at an average rate of eight pesos, or about sixteen shillings the ounce.

At Cape Gracias á Dios I parted company with my American friend, but we soon afterwards met again. My crew of Sambos had disappeared.

WHAT ARE FULGURITES?

IN a few museums of Europe and America there are to be seen curious objects which resemble fossilised branches of trees, but they are not of vegetable origin. They were first discovered in 1711 by Hermann, the pastor of a church at Massel, Silesia. As a rule they are of a glassy nature, generally hollow throughout, and hard enough to scratch glass.

These objects are termed fulgurites (Lat. *fulgur*, lightning). The Germans term them *blitzröhren*, signifying lightning tubes. Curiously enough, they are rarely mentioned, even in prominent scientific treatises. Their formation is very easily accounted for. When a flash of lightning strikes sandy soil, so enormous is its heat that it instantly vitrifies the quartz particles with which it comes in direct contact, converting them into what may be regarded as a glass of rather poor quality. These vitreous tubes vary in length from twelve to fifteen feet, and in some cases they have been found to extend to a depth of even thirty feet. Their diameter ranges from the size of a goose quill to about four inches.

When Alexander Von Humboldt, at the risk of his life, climbed the precipitous peak of the Nevada de Zoluca in Mexico, he found fulgurites upon it. Charles Darwin also mentions these singular objects in his book of travels.

Fulgurites are not only produced in sandy strata, but are also found in more compact rocks. Among these latter such objects are naturally of slight depth, and frequently are no more than a thin glassy coating on their surface. Indeed the effect of lightning on some rocks is to produce a sort of enamel, which sometimes assumes a bead-like form.

Fulgurites occur in great abundance on the summit of Little Ararat in Armenia. The rock being there soft and porous, blocks a foot or more in length can be obtained which are perforated in all directions by little tubes filled with bottle-green glassy matter resulting from fusion of the rock itself.

In the Smithsonian Museum at Washington, D.C., United States, there is on view a small specimen which looks as though it had been bored by the ship-worm (*Teredo*), the holes being filled with a glass-like substance.

On the Sahara desert fulgurites are found in nearly every conceivable shape and size. Some are thirty or more feet in length, and four inches across at their thickest part. Others are not larger than a lead pencil, and there are yet others of the proportions of a knitting needle. These objects are of more than ordinary interest, since competent authorities on physics usually consider fulgurites as furnishing a good index as to the

size and force of the lightning stroke which produced them.

To the ordinary unscientific mind it is difficult to conceive how such a refractory substance as common sand or sandstone could in an instant be melted to glass, but when we consider the enormous energy of a flash of 'forked lightning,' the fusing effect is, after all, not so surprising.

It has been estimated that the electromotive force of such a flash must be about three and a half million volts, and the current fourteen millions of ampères, or to put it in popular phrase, some electricians have estimated the energy as equal to a blow of 3,284,182 horse power! This estimate is probably far too high (enough to volatilise the *silicon* of the sand), as the following case seems to indicate.

Somewhat recently, during a thunderstorm at Klausthal, in Germany, a flash struck a wooden pillar and melted two nails instantly. From the mass of the nails and the heat required to melt them, Dr Grottewitz, an electrician, calculated that they could only be fused artificially by an electric current of two hundred ampères, at a pressure of twenty thousand volts. This amount of energy applied for *one second* is equal to five hundred horse power, and applied for the one-tenth of a second would represent five thousand horse power. So, if we suppose the effect took place in the one-hundredth of a second, it would represent a force of fifty thousand horse power. Another noteworthy fact is, that fulgurites are in almost every instance found to terminate in an underground stream or reservoir of water. Hence it appears that subterranean waters play no inconsiderable part in the economy of Nature as conductors of electricity, thereby aiding in the restoration of electrical equilibrium over wide areas.

The nature of fulgurites was not explained till this century. Since then they have repeatedly been examined immediately after the lightning had struck. Savart produced fulgurites experimentally about 1830 by passing strong electric discharges through fine sand.

TWO STREAMS.

Two streams out-welling on the upland height,
Flowing in Sundered valleys of the hill,
Yet hearing each the other's presence still
In answering whispers thro' the silent night.

One amid foaming gorges deep and large
Battles his pathway downward to the plain
Till all his broken waters rest again
In level flowings by a daisied marge.

And lo, that other smiling sunny-bright
(Glides down with all the lilies on her tide,
With loving murmur ripples to his side,
Filling his channel fuller with delight.

In one thenceforth thro' winding vales they go,
Amid the sunshine and the winter weather,
Turning content the toiling mills together,
Merged at the last where sunset oceans glow.

T. P. JOHNSTON.

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INSIDE A BETTING CLUB.

THERE appeared in a recent number of this *Journal* an article entitled 'Betting and Betting Men,' the writer of which detailed with great clearness the methods of 'the Ring.' He also touched briefly on what is termed 'starting-price' betting—that mode of gambling which is daily indulged in by thousands upon thousands of people who rarely, if ever, set foot on a racecourse itself. When not pursued more or less openly in the streets, much of this starting-price business is—as the writer of the article stated—carried on through the medium of errand-boys, waiters, small shopkeepers, &c., who, for a consideration, collect from bookmakers' clients the slips of paper on which are written particulars of the bets which the accompanying stakes cover.

But there is another method of backing race-horses at starting-price—a method known as 'betting on the "tape";' and it was with the object of learning something about this mode of speculation that, on a recent afternoon, the present writer set out with an acquaintance who had agreed to initiate him into the mysteries of a typical London betting club.

Situated in a busy thoroughfare, some ten minutes' walk north of the city boundary line, the grimy premises before which my companion suddenly halted with a 'Here we are!' had the dilapidated look of a private residence long vacant and neglected. My guide tapped lightly upon the frosted glass which formed the upper portion of the door, and instantly a small wooden panel flew up at the side of the porch. Through the pigeon-hole thus disclosed a sallow-visaged young man glanced keenly at us; then the panel was lowered again, the door opened, and we entered. That is to say, my companion entered; for not until the janitor's query as to whether I was 'a friend' had been answered in the affirmative was I (a non-member) allowed to cross the threshold of the club.

It was not a very inspiring sight which met my curious gaze! A long, bare-looking apartment,

with slippery floor and smoke-blackened ceiling, from the centre of which was suspended a glittering chandelier of cut-glass; whitewashed walls, around almost the whole length of which ran a line of faded plush-covered seats; while in a gloomy corner stood a drinking bar, upon which was piled a heap of dirty glasses and empty bottles. 'The dancing hall,' my guide explained; 'there's a dance held here three or four times a week, you know.' He now led the way up a steep flight of stairs, well worn and totally innocent of covering. The landing gained, we found ourselves facing a baize-covered door, from the other side of which proceeded a curious clicking sound and the hum of voices. My companion tapped at the door, and, this being opened from within, we passed into a large comfortless room, which, but for a couple of long deal tables and a score or so of Windsor chairs, was quite unfurnished. Stay, though. Within a railed-off corner of the apartment there stood a writing-table, a leather-covered arm-chair, and a walnut pedestal. Upon this latter was fixed a curious-looking little machine that clicked jerkily even as I gazed at it, while, from a slit in the glass cover which protected the mechanism, there slowly issued a continuous strip of white paper, about an inch and a quarter in width. This was the 'tape,' an instrument similar in construction to that which is to be found in every large newspaper and stockbroker's office; and by means of which wonderful contrivance the press-agencies are enabled to supply racing intelligence, market movements, &c., simultaneously to any number of people who subscribe to their service.

I glance round the room. Some dozen members of the club are present—young, middle-aged, and elderly men; a few prosperous-looking, the majority seedy and down-at-heel. For several minutes the 'tape' has been silent; now, however, as I sit down alongside my guide, it recommences its jerky 'click-click,' while the strip of paper mechanically unreels and falls into a shallow basket beside the pedestal. At the same

moment a portly, well-dressed individual, whose florid features are cast in an unmistakably foreign mould, suddenly emerges from an inner room. I learn that this is Mr —, the proprietor (and bookmaker) of the club, who has been heavily fined on more than half-a-dozen occasions for keeping gaming-houses in various parts of the metropolis. Mr — is followed by a younger man, who carries under his arms an account-book and a cash-box, both of ample proportions. These the clerk—for such he is—deposits upon the writing-table within the railed-off space, while his portly employer, after favouring me with a brief glance, sinks heavily into his chair, lights a cigar, and nods affably to several of the club members.

Again the 'tape' is silent. Racing, which to-day is being carried on in the Midlands, does not commence until two o'clock; and it still wants eight minutes to that hour. Evidently Mr — subscribes to what is termed a 'full sporting service'; for his clerk on glancing at the yard or so of paper strip which has accumulated in the basket, facetiously calls out: 'Latest cricket and yachting, gentlemen!' Finding, however, no interest displayed by those present in the scores and results in connection with the two pastimes mentioned, he tears off the printed strip and throws it into a corner. Meanwhile, the number of persons assembled has increased to about a score, the majority of whom are eagerly scanning sporting newspapers and 'form-books' with a view to 'spotting' winners.

Click—click! click—click! The bookmaker's clerk hurries to the 'tape' instrument again, and the narrow paper commences to uncoil as he holds the torn end between finger and thumb. 'First race—nine runners!' he suddenly announces, and proceeds to call out the names of the animals and riders who are competing in the two o'clock event. This done, he tears off the strip and pins it upon a baize-covered board which hangs against the wall. 'Now, gentlemen! make your bets on these nine runners,' cries Mr —, tapping vigorously the lid of his capacious cash-box. A middle-aged man, who looks like a fairly well-to-do tradesman, approaches the writing-table, and, handing the bookmaker a sovereign, observes: 'Half each way Knight Errant.' [By this he means that he stakes ten shillings upon the horse in question winning, and ten shillings upon its getting a 'place'—that is, first, second, or third.] Mr — throws the coin into his box, and by the time his clerk has made a note of the bet, several other club-members are waiting to do business. One man says: 'One shilling Tantrum to win; another 'Two shillings each way King of Spades; while others 'lay out' various sums on Knight Errant, which horse, judging from its recent performances, will start a warm favourite; or, as one youthful speculator knowingly observes: 'The "Knight" 'll be a jolly hot pot—odds on, most likely.'

So the wagering briskly proceeds for four or five minutes, only two of the nine horses competing being supported to any extent. Then, as the 'tape' gives a few warning 'clicks,' the clerk shouts out: 'They're off! any more bets, gentlemen?' A few backers, who until now have not been able to make up their minds, rush hurriedly to the table and support their 'fancies; and scarcely has the last shilling bet been booked when the 'tape' recommences clicking. All conversation is hushed as Mr — leans forward and glances at the slowly uncoiling strip. 'Negress has won, gentlemen,' he unconcernedly remarks; and I notice the countenances of several present droop visibly, while a few other members give vent to exclamations of disgust. For Negress, it appears, is an unreliable animal, whose recent performances in public have not warranted 'students of form' in supporting her to-day for a single sixpence.

The winner having thus 'come up' from the course, a little wagering now proceeds between Mr — and several of his customers as to what animals have run second and third to Negress. Not long is there any uncertainty on this score; for the 'tape' soon clicks out the full result: 'Negress—first; Knight Errant—second; Tantrum—third.' This has been a profitable race for Mr —, his book showing that of the seven pounds or so staked only two shillings is 'on' the actual winner. The 'price' of the latter next 'comes up'—ten to one against, while, a few minutes later, comes the 'full betting,' the prices of the second and third horses being respectively five to four against, and six to one against. Mr — now settles with those who have backed the winner, or Knight Errant and Tantrum for 'places,' the latter receiving their stakes and one-fourth of the odds quoted against the second and third horses winning. Altogether the bookmaker 'pays out' about three pounds, so that he clears four pounds or so on the race.

There are nearly forty backers assembled by the time 'runners and jockeys' for the second event are announced. Although this race is won by the favourite, its 'price' is so unremunerative (eleven to eight on) that the money staked upon the four other animals which have competed is more than sufficient to cover those odds. The third event on the programme falls to a seven to one 'chance' which has been supported for a few shillings only; while the succeeding race is secured by an unknown and unbacked colt against which the outside price of one hundred to six is returned.

Meanwhile, members continue to arrive in twos and threes; and the room is soon uncomfortably crowded. Here is a pale, anxious-eyed youth intent on exploiting an infallible 'system'—so infallible that by the end of the afternoon it will reduce him to his last halfpenny. Mr — likes these 'system-followers'; for, whatever the system may be, he invariably recognises it as an ancient one which has years ago been tried and found wanting. He, the bookmaker, possesses capital; his 'punters'—well, a few consecutive days of what they call 'bad luck' suffices to

'break' them, when they disappear for a week or two, only to return with a few more sovereigns and a 'new' system, which is really no more new than it is workable.

At the end of the nearest table sits a bloated, gray-bearded man, whose coat is frayed and shiny with age, and whose boots are cracked in half-a-dozen places. This individual is to-day a follower of 'Dead Snip'—the tipster to a mid-day sporting sheet that emanates from a dirty alley off the Strand. My companion and guide informs me in a whisper that the wretched old fellow is always 'discovering' some new racing-prophet, whose tips he follows until all his money is gone. Now and then he has a run of luck, and turns his few poor shillings into sovereigns. In such a case he proceeds to 'play up' his winnings; that is, he plunges his whole capital upon a horse which is said to be a 'moral certainty,' a 'dead pinch'—a really 'good thing,' in fact. But the 'good thing' in question fails to win; whereupon our elderly punter angrily deserts the whole tribe of racing-tipsters until, from somewhere or other, he can obtain a few more shillings wherewith to renew his hopeless task of 'breaking the book-maker.'

Slowly and monotonously the afternoon drags on. 'Runners and jockeys' are announced for each successive event; names of winners come up on the 'tape,' followed by their 'starting-prices.' Successful backers are paid their winnings, while the unsuccessful look glum, and nervously turn the pages of 'form-books' in the hope of selecting the winner of the seventh, and last, race of the day. Alas! for their hopes of recouping a portion of their losses. It appears that out of the seven animals entered for the event in question only one is ready to compete; so the race results in a 'walk over.'

No sooner is this fact announced than a pack of cards is produced, and about a score of members draw their chairs around one of the long deal tables. The game they commence to play is known as *chemin de fer*; and Mr —'s clerk acts as 'croupier.' I learn that at each *coup* effected by the 'banker,' sixpence of his winnings is placed in the croupier's box for the benefit of the club proprietor. As *coups* are 'brought off' very frequently indeed, and as it is no uncommon thing for play to begin immediately after racing is over, and proceed continuously until eight or nine o'clock on the following morning, it will readily be understood that *chemin de fer* is an extremely profitable source of income to Mr —. During the hour I stood watching the game at least a dozen players dejectedly rose and left the table; so eagerly, however, was each seat thus vacated reoccupied by one or other of the crowd of onlookers who pressed around that play never once slackened for lack of gamblers.

I was not sorry when my companion at length expressed himself ready to depart. With a last look at the circle of flushed faces, we passed through the room, descended the stairs, and in a few moments stood once again in the open street.

So ended my visit to a club, whose object—*vide* the card of rules which lies before me—is to promote 'mutual entertainment, music, and social and intellectual improvement in general' (!) In London alone there exist an enormous number

of such establishments; and, cheerless dens though they are, they possess an irresistible attraction for thousands of men—an attraction which, in too many cases, leads to ruin, moral and physical.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER V.—WITH THE ELECT.

THE ragged beard had been trimmed to a point; the uncouth hair had been cut, shampooed, and invested with a subtle, inoffensive aroma; and a twenty-five-shilling Lincoln & Bennett crowned all without palpable incongruity. The brown, chapped neck, on the other hand, did look browner and rougher than before in the cold clutch of a gleaming stand-up collar. And a like contrast was observable between the ample cuffs of a brand-new shirt, and the Duke's hands, on whose hirsute backs the yellow freckles now stood out like half-sovereigns. Jack drew the line at gloves. On the whole, however, his docility had passed all praise; he even consented to burden himself with a most superfluous Inverness cape, all for the better concealment of the ready-made suit. In fine, a few hours had made quite a painfully new man of him; yet perhaps the only real loss was that of his good spirits; and these he had left, not in any of the shops to which Claude had taken him before dinner, but, since then, in his own house in Belgrave Square.

Claude had shown him over it between nine and ten; they were now arm-in-arm on their way from this errand; and the street-lamps shone indifferently on the Duke's dejection and Claude's relief. He had threatened instant occupation of his own town-house; he had conceived nightmare hospitalities towards all and sundry; and had stuck to his guns against argument with an obstinacy which made Claude's hair stand on end. Now the other had less to say. He had seen his house. The empty, echoing, inhospitable rooms, with perhaps a handful of electric lights freezing out of the darkness as they entered, had struck a chill to his genial heart. And Claude knew it as he led the way to his own cosy chambers; but was reminded of another thing as he approached them; and became himself, on the spot, a different man.

He had forgotten the two friends he had invited round that night for a private view of the large-paper edition. He was reminded of them by seeing from the street his open window filled with light. And his manner had entirely altered when he detained the Duke below, and sought with elaborate phrases to impress him beforehand with the transcendent merits of the couple whom he was about to meet. Jack promptly offered to go away. He had never heard tell of Impressionism, and artists were not in his line. What about the other joker? What did he do?

'Nothing, my dear fellow; he's far too clever a fellow to do things,' explained Claude, whose changed speech inclined the other to flight quite as much as his accounts of the men upstairs. 'The really delicate brains—the most highly sensitised souls—seldom spend themselves upon mere creative work. They look on, and possibly

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criticise—that is, when they meet with aught worthy their criticism. My friend, Edmund Stubbs, is such an one. He has a sensitised soul, if you like! His artistic standard is too high, he is too true to his ideals, to produce the imperfect. He is full of ideas; but they are too big for brush, pen, or chisel to express them. On the other hand, he's a very fountain of inspiration, tempered by critical restraint, to many a man whose name (as my own) is possibly a household word in Clapham, where poor Edmund's is unknown. Not that I should pity him on that score; he has a holy scorn for what himself would call a "suburban popularity;" and, indeed, I am not with him in his views as to the indignity of fame generally. But there, he is a bright particular star who is content to shine for the favoured few who have the privilege of calling him their friend!

'You do talk like a book, and no error!' said the Duke. 'I haven't ever heard you gas on like that before.'

And the pair went upstairs.

The bright particular star was discovered in Claude's easiest chair, with the precious volume in one hand, and a tall glass, nearly empty, in the other. The Impressionist was in the act of replacing the stopper in the whisky-decanter. And Claude accepted the somewhat redundant explanation, that they were making themselves at home, with every sign of approval. Nor was he slow in introducing his friends; but for once the Duke was refreshingly subdued, if not shy; and for the first few minutes the others had their heads together over the large-paper edition, for whose 'decorations' the draftsman himself had not the least to say, where all admired. At length Claude passed the open volume on to his cousin; needless to say it was open at the frontispiece; but the first and the only thing that Jack saw was the author's name in red capitals on the title-page opposite.

'Claude Lafont!' he read out. 'Why, you don't mean—to tell me—that's you, old brusher?'

Claude smiled and coloured.

'You an author!' continued the Duke, in a wide-eyed wonder. 'And you never told me! Well, no wonder you talk like a book when you can write one too! So this is your latest, is it?'

'The limited large-paper edition,' said Claude. 'Only seventy-five copies printed, and I sign them all. How does it strike you—physically, I mean?'

'Physically isn't bad,' murmured Stubbs; and Claude helped him to more whisky.

Jack looked at the book. The back was of a pale brown cardboard; the type had a curious, olden air about it; the paper was thick, and its edges elaborately ragged. The Duke asked if it was a new book. It looked to him a hundred years old, he said, and discovered that he had paid a pretty compliment unawares.

'There's one thing, however,' he added: 'we could chop leaves as well as that in the back-blocks!'

The Impressionist grinned; his friend drank deep, with a corrugated brow; the poet expounded the beauties of the rough edge, and Jack gave him back his book.

'I know nothing about it,' said he; 'but still, I'm proud of you, I am so. And I'm proud,'

he added, 'to find myself in such company as yours, gentlemen; though, I don't mind telling you, if I'd known I'd be the only plain man in the room I'd never have come upstairs!'

And the Duke sat down in a corner, with his knife, his tobacco, and his cutty-pipe, as shy as a great boy in a roomful of girls. Yet this wore off, for the conversation of the elect did not, after all, rarefy the atmosphere to oppression; indeed, that of the sensitised soul contained more oaths than Jack had heard from one mouth since he left the bush, and this alone was enough to put him at his ease. At the same time, he was repelled, for it appeared to be a characteristic of the great Stubbs to turn up his nose at all men; and as that organ was *retroussé* to begin with, Jack was forcibly reminded of some ill-bred, snarling bulldog, and he marvelled at the hound's reputation. He put in no word, however, until the conversation turned on Claude's poems, and a particularly cool, coarse thing was said of one of them, and Claude only laughed. Then he did speak up.

'See here, mister,' he blurted out from his corner. 'Could you do as good?'

Stubbs stared at the Duke, and drained his glass.

'I shouldn't try,' was his reply.

'I wouldn't,' retorted Jack. 'I just wouldn't, if I were you.'

Stubbs could better have parried a less indelicate, a less childish thrust; as it was, he reached for his hat. Claude interfered at once.

'My dear old fellow,' said he to Jack, 'you mustn't mind what my friend Edmund says of my stuff. I like it. He is always right for one thing; and then, only think of the privilege of having such a critic to tell one exactly what he thinks.'

Jack looked from one man to the other. The sincerity of the last speech was not absolutely convincing, but that of Claude's feeling for his friend was obvious enough; and, with a laugh, the Duke put his back against the door. The apology which he delivered in that position was in all respects characteristic. It was unnecessarily full; it was informed alike by an extravagant good-will towards mankind and an irritating personal humility; and it ended, somewhat to Claude's dismay, with a direct invitation to both his friends to spend the entire month of August at Maske Towers.

Perhaps these young men realised then, for the first time, who the rough fellow was, after all, with whom they had been thrown in contact. At all events, the double invitation was accepted with alacrity; and no more hard things were said of Claude's lyrics. The flow of soul was henceforth as uninterrupted as that of the whisky down the visitors' throats. And no further hitch would have occurred had not the Impressionist made that surreptitious sketch of the Duke, which so delighted his friends.

'Oh, admirable!' cried Claude. 'A most suggestive humouresque!'

'It'll do,' said Stubbs the oracle. 'It mightn't appeal to the suburbs, curse them, but it does to us.'

'Grant the convention, and the art is perfect,' continued Claude, with the tail of his eye on Jack.

'It is the caricature that is more like than life,' pursued Stubbs, with a sidelong glance in the same direction.

Jack saw these looks; but from his corner he could not see the sketch, nor had he any suspicion of its subject. All else that he noted was the flush of triumph, or it may have been whisky, or just possibly both, on the pale, fringed face of Impressionism. He held out his hand for the half-sheet of paper on which the sketch had been made.

'I hope it won't offend you,' exclaimed the artist, hesitating.

'Offend me! Why should it? Let's have a look!'

And he looked for more than a minute at the five curves and a beard which had expressed to quicker eyes the quintessence of his own outward and visible personality. At first he could make nothing of them; and even when an interpretation dawned upon him, his face was puzzled as he raised it to the trio hanging on his words.

'It won't do, mister,' said the Duke reluctantly. 'You'll never get saplings like them,' tapping the five curves with his forefinger, 'to hold a nest like that,' putting his thumb on the beard, 'and don't you believe it.'

There was a moment's silence. Then the Impressionist said thickly:

'Give me that sketch.'

Jack handed it back. In another moment it was littering the floor in four pieces, and the door had banged behind the indignant draftsman.

'What on earth have I done?' cried the Duke, aghast.

'You have offended Llewellyn,' replied Claude shortly.

'How? By what I said? I'll run after him this minute and apologise. I never meant to hurt his feelings. Where's that stove-pipe hat?'

'Let me go,' said Stubbs, getting up. 'I understand the creative animal; it's thin-skinned; but I'll tell our young friend what you say.'

'I wish you would. Tell him I meant no harm. And fetch him down with you in August if I don't see you again.'

'Thanks, and good-night. You may count on us both. I'll put it all right with Ivor, never fear; but these creative asses (saving your presence Lafont) never can see a joke.'

'A joke!' cried Jack, when he and Claude were alone.

'It was a very poor one,' said Claude severely.

'Look here,' said the Duke, 'what are you givin' us, old boy? Seems to me you clever touchers have been getting at a cove between you. Where does this joke come in, eh?'

And his good faith was so obvious that Claude picked up the four quarters of torn paper, fitted them together, and entered upon yet another explanation. This one, however, was somewhat impatiently given and received. The Duke professed to think his likeness exceedingly unlike, when, indeed, he could be got to see his own outlines at all, and Claude disagreeing, a silence fell between the pair. Jack sought to break it by taking off his collar (which had made him miserable) and putting it in his pocket with a significant look; but the act provoked no comment. So the two men sat, the one smoking cigarettes, the

other his cutty, but neither speaking, nor yet so much as reading a line. And the endless roar of Piccadilly, reaching them through the open windows, emphasised their silence, until suddenly it sank beneath the midnight chimes of the city clocks. In another minute a tiny, tinkling echo came from Claude's chimney-piece, and the Duke put down his pipe and spoke.

'My first whole day in London a goner,' he said; 'and a pretty full day it's been. Listen to this for one day's work,' and as he rehearsed them, he ticked off the events on his great brown fingers. 'Got run in—that's number one. Turned up among a lot of swells in my old duds—number two. Riled the cleverest man you know—number three—so that he nearly cleared out of your rooms; and, not content with that, hurt the feelings of the second cleverest (present company excepted) so that he *did* clear—which is number four. Worst of all, riled *you*, old man, and hurt *your* feelings too. That's the finisher. And see here, Claude, it isn't good enough and it won't do. I won't wash in London, and I'm full up of the hole; as for my own house, it gave me the fair hump the moment I put my nose inside; and I'd be on to make tracks up the bush any day you like—if it weren't for one thing.'

'What's that,' said Claude, 'if it's a fair question?'

The other concealed his heightened colour by relighting his pipe and puffing vigorously.

'I'll tell you,' said he; 'it's that old girl and—what's the daughter's name again?'

'Olivia.'

'Olivia. A beautiful name for a beautiful girl! She's all that and more.'

'And much more.'

'You see, she's as good inside as out; she has a kind heart.'

'I have always found it so,' said Claude, 'and I've known her since she was a child.'

The two kinsmen, who had been so wide apart a few minutes since, were now more than ever mutually akin. They drew their chairs together; but the touchstone was deep down in either heart.

'You knew her when she was a child,' repeated the Duke in a kind of awe. 'Yes, and I dare say, now, you used to play with her, and perhaps take her on your knee, and even pull her hair and kiss her in them old days. Yet there you sit smoking cigarettes!'

His own pipe was out. He was in a reverie. Claude also had his own thoughts.

'The one thing was this,' said the Duke at length: 'would the old woman and her daughter come to see us up the country?'

Claude was torn two ways. The Towers scheme was no longer his first anxiety. He returned to it by an effort.

'They would,' he said. 'Lady Caroline told me so. They would come like a shot in August. She said so herself.'

'Would you put me up to things in the meantime? Would you be showing me the ropes?'

'The very thing I would like to do so far as I am able.'

'Then we'll start to-morrow—I mean to-day. That settles it. And yet?—'

'Out with it,' said Claude, smiling.

'Well, I will. I mean no harm, you under-

stand. Who am I to dare to look at her? Only I do feel as if that girl would do me a deal of good down there—you know, in making me more the sort of chap for my billet. But if she's gone and got a sweetheart, he might very easily object; so I just thought I'd like to know.'

'She hasn't one, to my knowledge,' said Claude at length.

'Is that a fact?' cried the Duke. 'Well, I don't know what all you fellows are thinking of, but I do know that I am jolly glad. Not from any designs of my own, mind you—I haven't as much cheek as all that—but to save trouble. Do you know, Claudy, I've had a beast of a thought off and on all the night?'

'No; what was that?'

'Why, I half suspected she was your own girl.'

HAIL STONES.

HAIL is a familiar phenomenon of nature which in this country attracts but little attention, because its effects are, generally speaking, quite harmless; it is very rare indeed that the hailstones are bigger than a pea, and although they create a certain amount of noise banging up against our windows, they are seldom of sufficient size and violence to succeed in breaking them.

It is very different in other countries which are rather nearer the equator than we are; in them it is not uncommon to have violent hailstorms, in which the stones are so large that the damage to property, and even human life, is apt to be very considerable. Such a one occurred in Northern India, 1st May 1888, which, besides damage to cattle, crops, and smaller things, caused much loss of life. The collector said in his report that at Moradabad alone there were not less than two hundred and thirty deaths through it; those caught in the open were simply pounded to death, though doubtless many lightly-clad natives, who may simply have been stunned, were killed by the intense cold consequent on being practically packed in ice for a short time. Spring-time in India is the customary period for native marrying, and many marriage parties caught, far from shelter, were done to death in this terrible manner. This great mortality naturally reminds one of the battle of the Israelites with the five kings of the Amorites, when 'they were more which died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.'

Storms of equal size and violence have occurred much nearer home, although fortunately with considerably less loss of life, probably because the farther north they occur, the longer warning they give, and shelter may be nearer and clothes less scanty. At Gratz, in August 1891, hailstones from one and a half to two and a half inches in diameter fell and formed heaps of ice as much as three feet deep in some places; the sudden cold also was very trying, the temperature during the storm falling as much as thirty-eight degrees Fahrenheit.

Thunder and lightning and strong uncertain winds invariably accompany hailstorms, and of these the wind is accountable for no small amount of the mischief, for it is always of

great violence, generally coming from more than one direction, and so giving rise to whirlwinds, which sweep along, leaving permanent marks of their destructive power. Another characteristic of hailstorms is that they are always very narrow, so that one that travels from one to two hundred miles will most probably not exceed eight to ten miles in breadth: they will arise in some given place, and thence perhaps travel in only one direction, or perhaps from the spot where it first occurs two storms will travel in different directions; moreover, they do not always travel in a straight line, their course being frequently curved. In this way very curious results may happen, as, for instance, one landowner may escape any damage whatever, while his neighbours on every side suffer considerably; or half of one celebrated vine district may be seriously damaged, while the other half escapes altogether. This would form a grand excuse for many hotel proprietors whose cellars are scarcely up to the mark.

It was thought that as lightning invariably accompanied hailstorms that it was in some way accountable for them, and indeed many hold to this still; so it was conjectured that lightning-conductors might, by carrying off the electricity from the clouds, prevent the occurrence of the storm. These were tried in France by some vine-growers, but they asserted that they had a contrary effect, and were the means of bringing down the storm on the vineyards they were meant to protect, so that to be of any good the 'paragrêles' would have to be erected two or three miles to windward; this of course might seriously interfere with somebody else, so could scarcely be done.

The size of hailstones varies from the small pellets familiar in this country—about a quarter of an inch in diameter—to some as large as cricket-balls. In the storm previously mentioned as occurring in Northern India, stones were picked up at Delhi weighing four ounces, and others carefully measured were found to be as much as two and three-quarter inches in diameter. Fairly large ones have been known to fall in England, for Pepys in his diary mentions some as large as walnuts having fallen at Harwich in 1666; and at Liverpool, in June 1889, there was a storm in which they were found to range from seven-eighths of an inch to an inch and three-quarters in diameter; these also might be described as being as large as walnuts. Fortunately this size is of very rare occurrence in Great Britain, else our already handicapped agriculturists and fruit-growers would have yet another enemy to deal with, and a dangerous one too, for hailstorms are more frequent in late spring and summer than at any other time of the year.

The form which hailstones take varies a good deal, one of the most interesting being oval or round, and formed of layers of ice alternately clear and opaque. They were of this kind in the above-mentioned storm which took place at Liverpool, and consisted of four or five layers. But Professor Olmsted of Yale College, U.S., has counted as many as thirteen layers in some large hailstones that fell in America a few years ago. His explanation of their formation is very ingenious, and has found much

favour with meteorologists. The air in the centre of a whirlwind is somewhat rarefied, and when a current of air charged with vapour is drawn into this space, it may be condensed into rain, or at a high elevation into snow. Now if the rain thus formed is drawn up by an ascending current into the snowy region, it will, if kept there long enough, be frozen, and then, if propelled outside the whirlwind, fall to the ground. But in falling the hailstones may be caught up by another current and again drawn into the whirling gyrations of air, when the moisture condensed on them during their fall will be frozen, thus forming another layer of ice. This may be repeated several times, and thus give rise to the onion-like formation which is so characteristic.

There is, however, another form that large hailstones frequently take which is less easy of explanation; it is when they have a nucleus of dull-looking ice which is covered with ice crystals, more or less radiating from the centre, and sometimes forming hexagonal prisms, which give the hailstones sharp, jagged outlines. This formation has puzzled many observers, but a beautiful experiment of M. Dufour tends to throw some light upon it. He suspended some drops of water in a mixture of almond-oil and chloroform, which was of such consistency that the water assumed a spherical shape, and remained in the middle of the mixture without any tendency to rise or sink. In this condition it could be cooled down much below freezing-point without congealing; but when it received a sharp electric shock, or if a piece of ice was brought in contact with it, it instantly solidified, and the spheroidal mass thus frozen resembled a hailstone with a nucleus of opaque ice surrounded by crystals of ice radiating from the centre. It is noteworthy in respect to this experiment that hailstorms are almost invariably accompanied by electrical disturbances in the atmosphere, and for a long time theories attempting to explain the formation of hailstones have been based on this fact; but of late meteorologists have been inclined to think that the thunder and lightning are possibly as much the effect as the cause of hailstorms.

Professor Reinsch has related how he examined some hailstones which appeared to have a bubble in the centre of them; when allowed to melt, before they had gone very far they burst, and he found that the volume occupied by the air thus liberated was fifty times greater than that which it occupied in the hailstone. He did not attempt to give an explanation of such a remarkable occurrence, avowing that it was a regular puzzler.

The ordinary small hailstones are not so puzzling, and the general text-book definition of 'frozen rain' would seem to be not very far out, for an Italian professor actually saw it being formed one day. He was seated at a window of a house forming one side of a courtyard, and noticed the rain streaming from a roof on his right being driven back and up in thick drops by a cold north wind. Suddenly a south wind blew, and the drops of rain tossed hither and thither were quickly transformed into hailstones. When the south wind ceased, the hailstones also ceased being formed; but

when the wind blew again, once more the hailstones became visible. He states that this occurred two or three times in ten minutes.

However, it is doubtful if the true explanation has been yet found. Of theories there is an abundance of all sorts, from the simple 'frozen rain' to an elaborate one describing them as coming from interplanetary space; but one has not yet been formed that will include all the observations—and they are very varied—that have been made.

A CHILD OF TONKING.

CHAPTER IV.

JUST before sunset that afternoon a native messenger put in an appearance at the fort. He hailed from a village some twenty miles up the river, and brought a letter from a French missionary, in which it was stated that the Chinese had crossed the boundary and were threatening the place. Any assistance which could be rendered must be sent at once, otherwise it would be too late. Within five minutes of the commandant's breaking the seal the contents of the letter were known all over the fort, and the regiment was half mad with excitement. The prospect of seeing a little active service was most grateful to men long since tired to death of the monotonous barrack life.

The buildings resounded with expressions of delight; conjectures as to when a start would be made, and whether the enemy would stand their ground, were to be heard on all sides. Only Black Rat held aloof. He feared lest he might be chosen to accompany the party, not because he had any apprehension as to the danger of the expedition, but because he feared lest anything should happen to the child during his absence. However, he had not long to wait before his fate was known. Within half-an-hour of the receipt of the letter it was announced that B Company were to have the honour of chastising the invaders. Now both Black Rat and Long Jean were members of that portion of the regiment, and, contrary to their usual custom on such occasions, both their hearts were heavy within them. Little Tata watched their preparations with considerable interest from the Auvergnat's bed, and when they had finished, demanded to be carried upon his chief protector's shoulder according to custom. Black Rat, however, put him by, and went in search of a man whom he thought he could trust. Having found him, he confided the child to his care, bidding him, under pain of death, see that no harm occurred to him during their absence. The man gave his promise, and, when they had bidden the little one an affectionate farewell, the two men took their places in the ranks, and presently marched out of the fort. The colonel's wife watched them, a smile hovering round the corners of her mouth. She was aware that three days must certainly elapse and possibly more, before they could return, and she congratulated herself upon her astuteness in arranging that that particular company should be the one selected.

Three days did pass before the company returned to the fort. During that time they lost half of their number, and inflicted as pretty a

little defeat upon the marauding Chinese as any commanding officer could desire. As they approached it, and for the first time since he had known it, the grim fort standing on its little eminence looked like home to Black Rat. He pictured the baby's delight at seeing him, and as soon as they had crossed the bridge and entered the stockade, he began to look about him in the hope that he might catch a glimpse of Tata's face. Long Jean was equally eager, but on the other hand he was less demonstrative; but when they were dismissed he was not long in accompanying his comrade in the search. They made their way to their own barrack-room, but Tata was not there. Black Rat questioned the men he saw, but it seemed to him they returned him evasive answers. He called to the little one in stentorian tones, helped by Long Jean, but without success. The child was not to be found. With a fear in their hearts that they had never known before, they went in search of the man to whose care they had entrusted their treasure. The fellow would gladly have avoided them, but they were not to be balked. Long Jean held him in his ponderous grasp, while Black Rat, whose voice shook with passion, questioned him as to his charge. Even when he had succeeded in disengaging his throat from the Auvergnat's grasp, it was little the man could tell them. The baby had cried a little after his friends' departure, but had soon recovered, and had given no trouble until the middle of the day following, when he had suddenly and unaccountably disappeared during the time the man was standing sentry. Where he had gone no one could tell. Search was made in every direction, but to no purpose. The colonel's maid was questioned, but she denied having seen him at all. She had something more to do than to be looking after babies, she said, and at the time this was taken as conclusive evidence that she knew nothing whatsoever of the case in hand. Since the colonel's departure they had searched the whole fortress from one end to the other, but without reward. Little Tata was as lost as it was possible for a child to be.

When the man had finished his tale, Black Rat informed him that he intended to thrash him within an inch of his life. This he did to his complete satisfaction, and then went off to make further inquiries. That the colonel's wife had taken the opportunity of his being out of the way to abduct the child he felt as positive as he was of his own identity. But he would be even with her yet! When night had fallen he called Long Jean aside, and spoke with him earnestly for the space of half-an-hour. At the end of that time they separated—Black Rat in the direction of the kitchen, his companion to return to his own room.

At the usual hour they retired to rest, wearied out with their anxiety. During the evening scarcely a man had spoken to them. They were too dangerous for any liberty to be taken with them. They were allowed to go their own way unmolested; and as they had put their veto on conversation, within an hour of the lights being put out every man was fast asleep. When they had allowed sufficient time to elapse they rose and dressed themselves. Then carrying their boots in their hands, and treading softly lest they

should wake the others, they made their way towards the door, stopping at the arm rack to withdraw their rifles and as many rounds of ammunition as they could discover. This done, they crept along in the shadow of the veranda towards the eastern wall. Fortunately the night was dark, and thick clouds covered the face of the sky, otherwise they could scarcely have failed to have been discovered. Pausing at an arranged spot to pick up a small sack of provisions which Black Rat had placed there earlier in the evening, they pushed on to the wall itself. To surmount the stockade was a matter of no small danger and difficulty. The spikes were the danger; to avoid the sharpened bamboos on the other side without attracting the attention of the sentries was the difficulty. When a large portion of the fence gave way under the Auvergnat's great weight, Black Rat felt certain that they could not fail to be discovered. But either the noise made was not so great as they imagined or the sentries were not as watchful as they might have been; at any rate, nothing came of it. Having satisfied themselves upon this point, they placed the two boards they had brought with them for that purpose upon the spikes, and thus made their way gingerly across. Once on *terra firma* they set off as fast as they could crawl in the direction of the river. The fact that they might be fired upon by their own garrison, that they might be captured by the Chinese, scarcely entered their heads; while what they intended to do beyond recapturing the child in the event of their catching up the party who had started so long ahead of them was equally uncertain. It was sufficient for the time being that they desired to reach the river and to find a boat.

At last, after nearly half-an-hour's painful crawl, hiding behind every bush and taking advantage of every inequality in the ground, they found themselves on the river bank. A little higher up, but fortunately on the same side, were a number of small native canoes or sampans, one of which they made haste to secure. Then, placing their rifles, ammunition, and provisions on board a canoe, they themselves embarked, and pushed out into mid-stream. They were both conversant with the track the other party would have to follow, and they were also aware that, if Fate were kind, they could gain on them considerably by means of the river.

It is doubtful whether either of them properly appreciated the curious nature of their position. To all intents and purposes they were deserters from the French army, and as such were punishable with death. That they had appropriated another person's boat was a fact of minor significance. All they thought of was the object of their mission. On their right was the fort, now standing out, a clear-cut black mass, against the starlit sky. On their left the tiled roofs of the Chinese village rose in broken confusion, while before them and behind was the dark expanse of river merged to the southward in the still darker shadow of the hills. Presently they turned the corner, and the high bank shut out the last sign of the fort and village from their view.

For the first few hours they paddled on with feverish energy, scarcely speaking at all, and then only in a whisper. After that they settled down to their work in a more sober fashion, taking it

in turns to paddle and to rest. By the time day dawned they had made considerable progress; by mid-day they were more than half-way upon their journey. It was their intention to follow the river to a certain point where the course the others were steering would bring them to an old fort, long since abandoned, but situated within a quarter of a mile of the water's edge. On making for the capital from the interior it was customary to spend the night in this fort, and Black Rat did not for a moment believe that the people he was pursuing would depart from the usual routine.

Throughout the afternoon they paddled on, keeping their eyes open for any possible enemy. But as the sun sank behind the jungle trees, they slackened their speed lest by any chance the commandant's party should be in the vicinity, and they might thus reveal their identity. Suddenly Black Rat, who was sitting in the bows, stopped paddling, and held up his hand.

'Listen,' he whispered; and as he spoke the sound of heavy firing broke upon their astonished ears.

What could it mean? Only one thing. The colonel's party were being attacked by the pirates who were known to infest the neighbourhood. He spoke the thoughts that were in his mind, and instantly drove the boat into the bank with a sweep of his paddle. Then bidding his companion conceal it and himself among the canes and await his return, he sprang out and disappeared into the jungle.

Nearly two hours elapsed before he returned. When he did his face was very troubled.

'*Sacre bleu*,' he said to himself on discovering the Auvergnat stretched out fast asleep. 'I believe the pig would snore on the Day of Judgment. Wake up! wake up!'

When he had aroused the giant to a knowledge of the present, he poured his tale into his ears. From what he had seen he had discovered that, without a doubt, it was the colonel's party that had taken refuge in the old fort. The Chinese had surrounded them on every side but that of a creek which led into the river, and it was evident that unless assistance came to them within the next few hours, which they must consider unlikely, they could not hope for anything but to be cut to pieces. In the face of this calamity individual hatred was forgotten. The woman had treacherously stolen what they valued most in the world, but the colonel and their comrades were innocent and in danger. At any cost it was their duty to attempt to save them. Black Rat asserted this with considerable emphasis, and Long Jean, accustomed to obey, did not contradict him. There was one way in which it could be done, the former knew, and only one.

Accordingly, as the moon rose above the jungle on the other side of the river, they resumed their places in the boat and paddled slowly down stream, keeping in the shadow of the bank as much as possible in order that their presence might not be detected. They were making for the entrance of the creek which led up to the fort in question. Once in it, it was as much as they could do to make any progress at all, so shallow was the water and so closed in was it and overhung by the jungle. At last, however, their faces and hands cut by the sharp grasses, and

dead tired by reason of their cramped positions, they reached the spot for which Black Rat was aiming. This was a low beetling cliff, rising sheer from the water's edge, and completely enclosed by undergrowth.

Bringing the boat up to the mouth of a small cave which could only be seen when the bushes were parted, he sprang out and assisted his comrade to do the same. Then, having taken their rifles and ammunition from the boat, Black Rat made a torch of dry grass, lit it, and led the way into the cavern. It was an uncanny place, made more so by the reverberation of the firing above; the walls were wet, and hung with stalactites. The Auvergnat had never heard of or seen the place before, but his companion, who had once been a member of the fort's garrison, was quite aware of its existence. At the end of the cavern was a small passage, plainly the work of human hands, which conducted them by a number of steps to the centre of the barrack square above. To lift the stone that covered it, and to spring up into the open air, was the work of a moment. Then they looked about them.

A sorrowful scene it was that they had presented to them. Scattered about in all directions were bodies of dead men. Out of the escort of six which had accompanied the colonel and his wife only one remained alive, and he was leaning against the gate severely wounded. The colonel himself lay unconscious by the centre hut, his head resting on his wife's lap, and a pool of blood forming at his side. Céleste stood, grim and despairing, behind her, and she was holding in her arms the child whose absence had caused Black Rat to follow them.

So numbed was the colonel's wife with terror that when she saw the two men whom she had so cruelly deceived rise, like spirits, from the ground before her, she was too far gone to express even the faintest show of wonderment. They seemed to be part and parcel of the fate which was now pursuing her. The child, however, recognised them at once, and gave utterance to a little cry. Indeed, had not Céleste restrained him, he would have leapt from her arms to greet them. Almost at the same instant the colonel opened his eyes, and a moment later recognised the men before him.

'Thank God we are saved,' he cried, imagining them to be part of some rescuing force. 'Who is commanding you? And how on earth did you manage to get here in time?'

'*Ma foi*, because we have deserted, *mon commandant*,' answered Black Rat, finding a curious delight in his audacity. 'And it is the fault of your precious wife that we have done so. She stole our child, and we have followed you to cut your throats and to get him back.'

The colonel turned his white face towards the woman they accused.

'So you lied to me in this also?' he said. 'You told me you had bought the child, and were bringing it away with this man's consent.'

Her audacity having quite deserted her, she did not answer. There was a little pause before the colonel spoke again.

'We are in your hands now; what are you going to do?'

'To save you,' answered Black Rat, who had by this time made up his mind. 'Listen to what I have to say, and waste no time in asking

questions. This place is surrounded. There is no chance of our being able to hold out till help comes, so whoever remains here will be a dead man before morning. Remember you have your women to look after. See you this passage? It leads down to the stream beyond the cliff. Our boat is there with provisions. You must get on board her, and then make your way to the mission at Songhay. All being well, you should be there by daylight.'

'But why do you give these instructions? You will come with us, of course. It is your boat.'

'Pardon, *mon commandant*, there is not room. The boat will hold but three at most. Some one must stay to cover your retreat. If those devils forced their way in and found us flown, they would suspect that there is another way out of this place, and then they would catch you before you could reach the river.'

'And you are going to give your lives for us, who have treated you so badly?'

'Tut, tut, that is nothing. It is not for your sake or the women's. It is for the child. If you wish to save their lives, you must swear to me, on your hope of heaven, that as long as you shall live that child shall be your care. Only thus can I let you go.'

As he finished speaking, the man leaning against the wall cried:

'They are coming! They are coming!'

Bidding Long Jean be off to the gate, Black Rat waited for the promise. That given, he assisted the colonel to rise, bade his wife pull herself together if she desired to save her life, and took the child from Céleste's arms. What his feelings were as he pressed that little form to his breast and kissed the tiny face for the last time on earth no one will ever know. The colonel could scarcely believe that this was the same man whom he had once looked upon as the blackest of his black sheep.

On reaching the entrance to the subterranean passage, the latter surrendered the infant to Céleste's care, and upheld the stone for them to make their way below. The colonel came last. '*Mon Dieu*, I will not go,' he said, and attempted to move back. 'My brave fellows, my children, you who are so noble, I shall stay and if need be die with you.'

'You are mad, my colonel,' cried the other in an ecstasy of impatience. 'You are wounded and useless. You could do nothing here. Besides, who is to protect the women? Go; this delay may ruin everything.'

But the colonel still held back until Black Rat took him by the shoulders and thrust him down the passage by main force, dropping the stone over the aperture behind him. Then, with a last look round, he went forward to the gate. If the lives of those in the boat were to be saved, they must endeavour to hold the gate and distract the enemy's attention as long as possible.

It was a very different 'Black Rat' who approached the gate a minute or so later. He seemed to have gone mad with excitement. He slapped Long Jean upon the shoulder and bade him prepare himself for the *fête* that was about to begin. He sang, he jested, and then he reeled as if he were drunk and fell against the wall.

'Come, you snipe,' he cried to the astonished remnant of the colonel's guard as he recovered

himself. 'This is going to be the warmest time we have ever known. Cheer up, *mon ami*; it was for this we were born into the world. *Pardieu*! the odds are great against us; but *ma foi*, if we cannot beat them, we'll at least show them how soldiers of France can die.'

As he finished speaking there was the sound of rustling feet outside, then the worm-eaten gate was broken down, and a second afterwards the three men were fighting like wild cats for their lives.

Long Jean was the first to fall, but not before he had done terrible execution. Little Pierre was the next to go, clutching at the knees of the man who stabbed him as he dropped, and driving what remained of his broken bayonet in below the ribs. Black Rat was left alone, but he did not seem to notice it. He continued to fight with the same cool, desperate courage until he had a heap of dead piled upon the ground before him like a wall. His strength, however, was failing fast, and it was not very long before his enemies found the opportunity they wanted. Then he fell forward with a choking cough, clutching at the body of the man upon whom he lay, and muttering with his dying breath:

'Tata—little Tata—remember it is for thee.'

Incredible as it may seem, the colonel and his party reached the mission post in safety and arrived at Haiphong in due course. The former has been true to his promise, and Tata is now a well-brought-up child of eight who goes to school, can read and write, and is quite familiar with the heroic tale of the men who gave their lives to save him. What his fate would have been had madame been permitted the care of his career it is impossible to say. Fortunately, however, she eloped in no very creditable company soon after their arrival at the capital, so that all trouble on that score was obviated. Of the vengeance that the French troops took upon the murderers of their comrades nothing need be said, save that it was complete in every sense of the word. To-day the fort is razed to the ground, and the jungle has grown over the place where it stood; but a large mound by the creek side, kept clear of weeds by every regiment that passes that way, as a sacred duty, still serves to show where lie at rest the men who so nobly gave their lives to save not only their wounded commander and two helpless women, but also what they loved better than all else in the world,

A CHILD OF TONKING.

LUMBERING IN CANADA.

By C. FAIRBAIRN.

THE business of timber getting, or 'Lumbering,' as it is named in our North American Colonies, is one of great importance, being second only to agriculture in extent and value, and nowhere else is the process better understood or practised. The rivers, the great chains of lakes, and even the peculiarities of climate, are all made to contribute to its success.

A glance at the map of Canada shows a large number of small lakes connected by rivers. Many of these are quite dry in summer, but when the snow melts are large streams, forming continuous chains of communication with the great lakes north and west; whilst those flowing southward

empty into the St Lawrence, the vast river which forms one of the principal highways of the province. On its broad surface it carries to the Atlantic all the products of the forests, which without it could only be forwarded with much labour and at great cost.

In winter the means of communication between places wide apart are greatly improved; roads that are comparatively impassable all the rest of the year may then be traversed with ease and rapidity. Lakes, treacherous swamps, and rivers are frozen hard, and with a few inches of snow are converted into excellent highways for sleighs. There is no method of travelling more pleasant and exhilarating than gliding over the snow with a scarcely felt motion to the merry sound of the sleigh bells; and these sleighs often carry loads which would tax our horses heavily even on our splendid macadamised roads. But above all, strong frosts followed by abundance of snow are welcomed right heartily by the Canadians, and especially by the lumberman, for without these his occupation would be very doubtful of success for that season. They mean to him good roads for conveying his logs to the rivers and lakes. They also mean sufficient water to flood the rivers when the snow melts in spring, and so get his timber to its destination earlier. In short, an open winter with but little snow means—in Canada—a calamity entailing enormous loss.

Canada, while in the possession of many wonderful advantages so admirably suited to her needs, also holds the largest and most valuable forests of pine in the world; more than one half its entire surface, or about a hundred thousand square miles of pine-forest, is still available, and forms the preserve from which the annual supply is obtained. The proprietary rights over these lands are held by the Canadian Government, and licenses or leases are sold to lumbermen, by auction to the highest bidder. These leases are for twenty-one years, and embrace all the timber of a certain kind over a number of square miles called 'limits.' When the timber is removed the land is ready for the settler, and the interest of the lumberman in the 'limits' terminates.

The lumberman is the pioneer in the settlement of the land. The roads he has made in the depths of the forest are ready for the farmer; and in winter when agriculture is at a standstill, the farmer often finds employment for himself, horses, and cattle in the lumber-camps. Situated as the farmer often is—far from any outlet for his produce—he there too obtains a market at home with good prices.

Lumbering operations begin early in the autumn. An explorer—an experienced backwoodsman long accustomed to forest life—finds his way into the 'bush,' and in these strange wild solitudes, where to the unaccustomed traveller every new scene is so exactly similar to those he has passed through, he never misses his way. Wandering on, he comes across a 'blazed line'—that is, where a piece of bark has been cut from a tree deep enough to leave on it a white mark, or where perhaps some saplings have been cut and heaped up; and keeping the same line he sees in the distance another 'blaze.' It may be the division line or boundary of two townships, or the guide to a settlement, or some distant woodland pasture, or it may lead to a pine grove marked for the axe

of the lumberman; and these marks are the finger-posts of the forest, intelligible only to those accustomed to forest life. The explorer seeks for some eminence, on which may be a lofty tree, and ascending this he marks the tall summit of a grove of pines, and taking the bearing by his compass he proceeds on his errand. The pine is singularly gregarious, and is usually found in family groups, which as a general rule occupy somewhat elevated land.

Having found the pine groves and the timber in sufficient quantity, the next step is to fix the most suitable place for an encampment. By judicious selection of the site a great deal of unnecessary labour may be avoided, for not unfrequently the timber has, on its way to its destination in the spring, to be driven through small lakes and rivers over a hundred miles before the St Lawrence is reached; and when we consider that this must be done within the short time required for the snow to melt, and the swollen rivers to decrease in volume, it is clear that all the appliances that can be employed to facilitate progress are put into requisition. These appliances are, no doubt, the result of long and accumulated experience, and show great ingenuity. Among them are slides for passing dangerous rapids or impassable falls, or blasting through rocks or other impediments in the beds of the rivers when they are dry, or straightening a bend in the stream where the loose timber might be caught, and so form a 'jam'—often a serious cause of delay. All these considerations have to be thought of in selecting a site for the camp. If there is timber within reach for more than one season's operations, then the encampment ought, if possible, to be central for the whole of the limits. It must also be near a plentiful supply of good water and convenient to the lake or river on which the logs are to be laid when frozen hard, and with easy access for bringing supplies of food, &c. When the arrangements are all satisfactorily completed, the explorer is joined by a gang of men to erect a dwelling-house or 'shanty,' besides stables, storehouse, and smith's or carpenter's workshops. At this time preliminary supplies of food, tools, &c., are brought into the forest, sometimes at the cost of a week's hard travelling, though when the snow comes the distance can be traversed in a single day.

There cannot be much done in the cutting of the timber before frost comes. There are two kinds of timber made—'square timber' and 'saw-logs,' although these are generally kept apart. When, however, both are prepared simultaneously, the square timber is selected from the best trees. It is almost all made for exportation to this side of the Atlantic, while saw-logs are taken to the sawmills, and cut up for the home market and the United States. When the snow comes the full complement of men are set to work, and in the clear frosty air it is almost incredible the amount of work the men can accomplish. They are well fed, and there seems to be something unusually stimulating in the atmosphere, while at the same time indolence finds its corrective in the severe cold. To a stranger, the long stern winter months in the forest would appear akin to banishment, with the same endless round of monotonous labour; for there are few of the men who enter

the woods in the autumn who ever think of going out to the front until the timber comes down the swollen river in the spring following. But the forest has its attractions to these back-woodsmen, as the ocean has for the sailor after a sojourn ashore. The long winter evenings are beguiled away by reading, jest, and song, and the clear frosty nights and starlit skies, varied by the roar of the storm in the woods, make the warmth and comfort of the shanty more appreciable by contrast. 'Early to bed and early to rise' is their motto, and long before daylight—breakfast over—they are tramping through the snow to the scene of their labours. It is a wild free life, and they seem to enjoy it thoroughly. In many of the camps there are Irish and French Catholics, and occasionally they are visited by a priest on Saturday evening. Sunday is then devoted to divine service. It is touching to see these men of wild and careless lives reverently and respectfully receiving the ministrations of their teacher. Early on Monday morning the priest is away through the snow with his blanket over his arm, with perhaps a tramp of eighty miles before he reaches his destination.

It is well for the lumberman when there has been, as mentioned, a good hard frost before snow comes. It hardens the swamps and covers the rivers and lakes with thick ice. A few inches of snow makes sleighing possible, and then the teamsters and cattle appear on the scene. Roads have been prepared, by cutting away the brush-wood and removing all obstructions, to the place where the timber is laid on the ice. A chain is fastened to a piece of square timber, which slides easily over the snow; but saw-logs are collected in large quantities, and a strong low sled is loaded from one of the heaps, and after one or two journeys over the improvised roads where never was road or passage before, the team moves along with its heavy load, easily, swiftly, and noiselessly, the sleigh bells alone giving notice of the presence of any living thing. Sometimes these journeys extend to ten and twelve miles; but more usually two and three, or even shorter distances.

The transition from winter to spring in Canada is comparatively sudden; spring comes swiftly, like twilight in the tropics. Nature asserts her power with great rapidity; a very short time suffices to loosen the bands of winter, and the silence that was oppressive is broken. Then follows the melting of snow, flooding the rivers, which rise far above their usual level; and so we find the timber, which was piled up on the ice, now afloat, and ready to be taken to its destination. The camp is broken up, and a busy scene is developed.

The most exciting and dangerous part of lumbering now begins, with the greatest risk of loss to the lumberman in the season's operations. Some of the difficulties to be encountered may be unforeseen, and are to be met on the threshold of the journey; others follow to the end, if the camp has been so far back as to be beyond those appliances which experience has proved so necessary. The slides are costly to make, and are not provided until there is a probability of their being largely used. Often before these are made the pioneer lumberman has to drive his timber—that is, run it through in single pieces—until he reaches the first place where slides are in use; and

this may be a long distance, subject to all the risks of having to break up a 'jam.' A jam is usually caused by one or more of the single logs getting across or fast in a narrow part or bend of the river, perhaps out of reach of the men; the logs following in quick succession soon become piled up in inextricable confusion, which the accumulation of water above and all the efforts of the men fail to force away. Then begins a dangerous series of operations. The banks of the stream may be precipitous, or the ice may not be melted; and while the water flows over the logs, the men, with long iron-shod poles in their hands, make their way cautiously over them to where the 'jam' originates. The scene appears to a spectator one of terrible risk and danger. Sometimes, when the 'jam' breaks up, the men have some distance to run over the rolling and heaving mass, urged on with frightful rapidity by the pressure of the accumulated water behind. A scramble for the shore follows, and woe betide the one who misses a step or slips a foot—a mishap too often resulting in loss of life. The daring of the men and their activity in keeping their feet in these circumstances are somewhat marvellous; but long practice makes the danger in their eyes of small account, and happily fewer accidents occur than might be expected. But at other times the jam is not so easily broken, especially with square timber, and delay is followed by most disastrous consequences; for if the river is falling in volume, then it becomes inevitable that the whole year's produce must be left in the bed of the river until another season comes round again. When they are running the slides exciting scenes often occur. These slides are sometimes of great length, and are constructed of large trees made square, and fitted carefully into a form resembling a gigantic square trough. The bed is about twenty-five feet wide, smooth and straight, with a few inches of water flowing over it; the sides, three feet high, serve as guides to the logs. An easy approach leads the timber on the slide, when it rushes down the slope with a rapidity which takes the breath away. At the bottom the plunge is into deep water.

The camp having broken up, the drive begins to the first lake, the men working from daylight to dark, through storm and sunshine; for there is now no time for lingering or delay, and it is yet early spring, with frosty nights and occasional snow-storms or heavy rain. Sometimes the men have not dry clothes for weeks. At night they gather a few pine or spruce branches to lie on, wrap themselves in their blanket and sleep soundly the sleep of the weary. Verily it is a time of hardship, borne cheerfully and without complaint, for every day brings them nearer home. In this country we have no idea of the rapid climatic changes characteristic of Canada. Spring is short—one week there is deep snow, and the next, the earth, which has been white for months, is laid bare, with birds in full song, and vegetation showing wonderful progress. When there is no rain the men get along comfortably enough. While some are bringing the logs down the river, others are engaged above the first slide preparing withes from saplings, to bind the square logs together and make small rafts called 'cribs.' These cribs contain perhaps a dozen logs of square timber, and are then ready for running

the larger streams and slides. Saw-logs are brought down singly except across the lakes. When a great number are enclosed by a 'boom'—a number of trees chained to one another—the two ends are brought together, enclosing the saw-logs. The crossing of the lake, sometimes with help of anchors and windlasses, is not without difficulty and risk, especially in strong headwinds, as the large surface exposed makes the wind take quick and strong effect.

But the raft, having crossed a lake, has to be separated at each river or slide, and again made up for every lake. Sometimes, when there has not been a sufficient quantity of snow or it has melted too rapidly, the rivers diminish in volume before the St Lawrence or other destination is reached, then the damming back of the water is resorted to, and on the accumulated water the saw-logs are floated past some obstacle. Usually the saw-logs reach their destination, where they are cut into deals, early in the summer, as the distance to be traversed is not so great; but the square timber has often a long distance to go before the deep water of the St Lawrence is reached. The great timbers, thirty to forty feet long, are made into 'cribs,' containing perhaps some twenty-five timbers, fastened together by cross-pieces called traverses, strongly pinned on. Not till the cribs reach the St Lawrence are they made into rafts to run the longer rapids. The raft is composed of a large number of cribs, fastened end to end, until a platform is made sometimes five hundred feet long by forty to fifty feet wide. It will be easily understood that an immense quantity of timber is used to compose a single raft. Starting from Lake Ontario, these rafts have to run the gauntlet of two great rapids—'Long Sault' and the 'Lachine'—with small lakes intervening. Sometimes, but very rarely, a raft of great value has been wrecked running these rapids. The great weight of a raft when once urged to a high speed by the force of the stream requires great caution in its management. In running the 'Lachine' rapids, which are the largest and swiftest on the continent of America, a special crew of French Canadians and half-breeds under a pilot are employed to conduct the raft through. The efforts of all on board are concentrated towards keeping it in the centre of the *approach* to the rapids; then flinging their long oars aside, they are on their knees, with clasped hands raised, imploring aid from on high. Well they know that no human efforts will avail them for any purpose when once caught in the embrace of that awful rush of angry water, which tumbles the great raft about, bending, rolling, and creaking as if it was a child's toy in the hands of a powerful man.

Once past these rapids, the lumberman's difficulties are ended. A tug steamer now takes the raft in tow, and soon reaches Quebec, probably to begin again another long journey across the ocean before being distributed into the various channels of industry.

In a few months the men are again in the forest, for it seems to hold out to them an attraction that is irresistible. There is a free, healthy life, with but few diseases or ailments to trouble them; for this they are indebted to a fine climate, to their being constantly in the dry bracing atmosphere, and to an abundance of good, whole-

some food. Sometimes, however, as the spring advances, the glare of the sun upon the snow renders them subject to a peculiar and distressing affection of the eyes called 'snow-blindness,' from which they recover when the snow disappears; but when a man is once affected, the malady is apt to return with increasing force on each succeeding spring, until the sight is eventually destroyed. From the moment the sun sets, the afflicted are perfectly blind, and remain so until sunrise next morning. It is sad to see these great, powerful, and otherwise healthy men grow blind within a few minutes' walk of their destination, and have to be led into the shanty by their companions. But the lumberman heartily enjoys his wild free life, and duly appreciates the unlimited freedom which the forest gives.

While lumbering is at times a lucrative business, it is also subject to great risks and vicissitudes, most of which it is impossible to foresee with any degree of certainty; while every year as the lumberman has to go farther into the forest, these risks and uncertainties are becoming greater.

A CASE OF FRIENDSHIP.

THE doctor had ridden in from Thundagra through the glare and dust of the hot, blistering roads. After a long, cool drink, he stretched himself out at full length in a Ceylon chair under the shady veranda at the back of his house, and began to read the messages scrawled on his engagement slate, or contained in the various notes he found awaiting his arrival as usual. A ring at the bell!

The doctor said something between his teeth. He did not want to be called out again until bath and breakfast had become a pleasant memory. Therefore it was with some relief that he heard a well-known mellow Irish voice asking for him.

'The doctor has been out all night'—began the servant hesitatingly.

'Come in, Lodge,' the doctor's words came ringing down the passage, and a moment later a tall, slight, handsome young fellow stepped out into the veranda.

'Well, Mike, what can I do for you?' he began; then he looked more closely at his visitor, the survey ending in a dissatisfied frown. 'Why, man, what's wrong with you? And I'm told you rode a steeplechase last week! Look here, Mike, this won't do.'

'Not for long, I'm afraid,' acquiesced the other politely.

'What do you feel like?' shortly.

'The usual thing—beastly tired,' with an intense intonation of the adjective, which lent it an indescribable force and significance.

'Ah! Stand up and let me see.'

Some minutes were spent in scientific tapping and listening, while the doctor's face grew slowly graver. When he had finished his examination, he stood opposite to his patient, his eyes dropped, considering.

Lodge watched him with a softening of his devil-may-care-expression. 'No need to break it to me, doctor; I know it,' he said gently.

The doctor almost started.

'You know it, yet'—

'Was there not some old girl who declined to die in her bed?—Elizabeth was it? Well, I'm of her way of thinking.'

'But, my good chap, your present mode of life means'—

'Yes, I know it all. I was a medical student once—among other things.' His voice changed to banter again. 'Now, seriously, do you think it would add materially to my chance of happiness if I sat waiting for the gentleman with the scythe, and shook in my chair at every footstep? As it is, if I jostle against him in the street, so much the better.' He paused, then asked, 'Any excitement would do the trick, now, I suppose?'

The doctor nodded slightly, then turned away, and sat down. Human life meant so much to him! Was it not the thing he tended and defended, and battled for every hour of every day, and many a night? The conversation was growing too strained for him.

'I can only warn you,' he said grimly.

Lodge felt the meaning of his tone.

'Thanks.' Then changing the subject, asked, 'By the by, have you heard that Alexander has been appointed acting manager of the Southern Cross Banking Company's branch here?'

The doctor roused himself from thought with brisk interest in the news.

'No, by George! I am glad, not only for his sake, but Nettie Shelton's, too.'

'From all people say, there is little doubt of the appointment being confirmed in a few months,' went on Lodge. 'I must avoid his society now, I suppose. He will be a long sight too respectable a citizen to consort with a disreputable beggar like myself.'

'You might give the disreputable beggar a chance of regaining his reputation,' rejoined the doctor with some dryness.

'Now, doctor, do you really think it worth while? If there's only half-an-inch of candle left, what's the odds if it stands in a draught?' Lodge rose as he spoke. 'All the same, if I believed it could benefit Alexander, I'd alter everything—eat sawdust for the rest of my natural life. You know all about Alexander?'

'I know he is your very good friend. I wish you would try to eat sawdust for your own sake, Mike.'

'Not good enough; but we'll see,' Lodge answered carelessly. 'I've heard what I came to hear, so I won't keep you any longer.'

The doctor accompanied his visitor through the passage, and opened the front door. A portly, well-to-do gentleman in a shady hat stood outside, his hand on the bell.

'Mornin', doctor. Hullo, Mike!' was his greeting.

Lodge looked down at him with an air of haughtiness.

'Good-morning, Brodway,' he replied coolly.

A furtive punch in the ribs from the doctor brought home to him the sense of his blunder. Here was he, Mike Lodge, a clerk at Teddington's, cheeking the Mayor of Nawarra, whose word was a mighty word in the councils of the Southern Cross Banking Company, returning well-bred insolence for Brodway's vulgar insolence with a happy-go-lucky forgetfulness of the fortunes of his friend Alexander. He could have kicked himself for the mistake.

Brodway stepped into the passage, preventing Mike's exit as he did so, took off his hat, and, while he mopped his forehead, asked meaningly:

'You're a friend of Alexander's, I believe.'

'We were schoolfellows, though Alexander has left me far behind now,' Lodge answered modestly enough.

'Then you may tell him from me that he should choose his friends with more care,' said Brodway venomously. 'He is acting manager of the S.C.B. branch at present; but I shall make it my business to acquaint the directors with the character of his closest associates, and I imagine they will find some one to replace him before long. He's cooked his goose by his friendship, I assure you!'

The doctor thrust out the younger man into the street before he could reply.

'Go and eat sawdust,' he said.

Lodge raised his hat in his own careless, graceful way, and went off down the narrow red-hot street without another word.

'Going to the dogs as fast as he can, you know,' commented the fat man genially.

'More's the pity! Fine young fellow too, if'—He checked himself, and it was a kindly gaze he sent after the slender, listless young fellow sauntering along the distant pavement.

'Yes, "if," and a precious big "if" too! He's a desperate young scamp, let me tell you. There are a very few things I don't think him capable of!' exclaimed Brodway. 'Alexander is making a fool of himself over Master Mike Lodge. I wish some one would give him a hint to drop it. The directors of the Southern Cross Banking Company won't stand it much longer, I know that.'

'You are one of them, Mr Brodway, are you not?' The doctor asked the question with a directness which somehow tended to discompose his interlocutor.

'I am, sir, I am.'

'Then why should not a man for old acquaintance' sake give a helping hand to another when he's down?'

'Because you can't touch pitch without soiling your hands. That's why, Dr English,' returned Brodway sharply, swelling out his chest. 'A man who wishes to get on in this world must choose his friends accordingly. And Alexander is trying for a responsible post—an excessively responsible post, I may say.'

'The company can't do better than take him, for he is a good man all round,' remarked the other shortly. 'He has none of poor Lodge's wild blood in him.'

That Mike Lodge was steadily going from bad to worse had been the talk of the township for months, and when the township of Nawarra decided upon anything, it held to the opinion formed very firmly. It was common talk that had it not been for the kindness of young Alexander of the S. C. Bank, Mike Lodge must have had his dismissal from Teddington's over that Thundagra affair. Alexander had behaved generously—had lent Lodge the money to put himself straight—and the general wonder was that Lodge had repaid him in full.

A certain incongruous friendship existed between the two. Most people believed it to have been begun long ago at home in the old country. However that might be, the community shook their heads over a continuance of the intimacy in the

present, when Alexander's prospects as a rising man, with a possible bank managership ahead of him rendered his choice of associates a matter of remark and importance.

That same evening two young men were strolling along the breakwater, of which Nawarra is so pardonably proud. One was short and square built, and he walked on lost in thought, the very rounding of his shoulders expressive of dejection. The other was Lodge, who glanced about him, enjoying in his reckless, lazy fashion all there was to enjoy in his surroundings. The evening was delicious after the heat of the day. A strong, cool breeze from the Antarctic regions swept in over the blue waters of the Southern Ocean. Away to the east stretched great, gray cliffs, their heads still crowned in sunlight, while the breakers, foaming before the wind, flung white wreaths about their feet.

'Enough,' said Lodge, stopping suddenly, and breaking the silence which had reigned unbroken between him and his companion since they set out. He threw himself into a seat as he spoke, with a sigh of fatigue.

'What? Tired already?' asked the other man, in half-peevisish surprise. 'That comes of'—

'All right, old chap, don't preach. I know what it comes of better than you do. Instead of looking like a young king coming into his kingdom, you're as sulky as a bear. What's up, Bob?'

Bob Alexander, thus appealed to, glanced back discontentedly towards the land, where parallel lines of roofs and dark green foliage, with here and there the sharp lance of a spire, showed clear-cut in the low rays of the sun, and considered the prospect awhile before he answered.

'I've had a letter from Brodway. He warns me that I must regard my position as a merely temporary arrangement, and urges me, even if it be for a short time, to maintain the traditions of the bank, not only in business transactions but in my private life. What's wrong with me, anyway? I was pretty hopeful this morning, but now the outlook has changed.' The speaker's face was clouded, and between his brows showed two upright lines, telling of premature anxiety and care. He had toiled for years to gain his present position in steady, honest, intelligent labour, slowly reasoning out each step of his life; and now, after all, to be warned as to his private conduct!

'I always knew Brodway was rather a brute; but I have given him no cause of offence,' Alexander went on, as the other remained silent. 'It's maddening, Mike! What does it mean?'

'I can tell you,' said Lodge, as he lit a cigar adroitly in the teeth of the wind. 'It means—me!'

'Rot!' cried Alexander, but there was a self-conscious ring in the tone that betrayed him; 'how could it mean you?'

'He told me as much. And—well, we've hung together a bit the last couple of years since I came out. You've stood by me—I need say nothing about it, but I dare say you guess how I feel.' Mike spoke the halting sentences with unusual difficulty, turning away his head.

'Shut up!' growled his friend, who had the rooted objection to uttered sentiment of any sort common to his nation.

'I merely wished to mention that I appreciated your shelling out that coin, which you had been

hoarding for "plenishing"—is that what you call it?' mockingly. 'Because the chances were ten to one that I could never pay you back.'

'You have done so though—with interest too,' broke in the other crossly. 'And what more can a man want? Do chain up!'

Mike laughed.

'By the bye, have I told you that I am going away for a change?'

Alexander sat up at this and turned to him.

'For a change?' he repeated slowly; 'have Teddington's given you—a—a holiday?'

'Well, no: I'm about to give them one. They accepted my resignation of the lucrative post I held in their firm with touching—gratitude, I was going to say—at any rate with alacrity.'

Alexander whistled, and considered Mike with a blank look.

'But have you thought it over? Why, Mike, it's next door to impossible to get anything to do anywhere! I wish you had come to me before you took such an extreme step,' and his anxious frown deepened.

'It would not have made any difference. I'm played out in this heat. I saw the doctor this morning, and he says I need change—of diet,' he added under his breath.

'What? English told you that? Now that I come to look at you, you do seem seedy.'

'You can put me out of your mind, Bob. I heard this morning for certain that my future is provided for.'

Alexander's face brightened.

'Good!' he said heartily; 'That's the best news I've heard this long while. How has it come about?'

'I'll tell you details another time, perhaps; now I want to get further into this letter of Brodway's.'

Alexander succumbed to this policy at once, and fell back into a discussion of his own affairs.

'Of course it means they won't make me manager after all, and yet Benson gave me to understand before he left that the Southern Cross Bank had a snug place waiting for him in the Melbourne house.'

'Has Brodway any spite against you?—or the Sheltons?' asked Lodge, looking out over the darkening sea.

'Pon my word, I can't tell!' replied the other wearily. 'If it were not for Nettie's sake, it would not matter so much. She is very patient and cheery, but there are all the young ones growing up, and I often think it is selfish of me to keep her to her promise, and prevent her marrying, as she could any day, and get into peace and comfort out of that noisy, crowded house.'

'I don't fancy Nettie is the sort of girl to change her mind,' Lodge remarked quietly. 'Stick to it, Bob; she is as good and as pretty as they make 'em.'

It had grown suddenly dark, as though a lamp had been turned out, in the last two or three minutes, and in the dusk Alexander spoke softly. 'I once thought, Mike, you were the man.'

'With such a life behind me, could I have been?' Lodge asked somewhat bitterly.

'You had not my chances. You were handicapped from the beginning—your home and your stepmother'—

'I am what I am, Bob; in my place you would

not have wrecked yourself for any outside influence. It was in me—my fault or my fate, or both—don't you see? But to return once more to our sheep. Have you given up all hope of becoming manager?'

'I think I may say yes. If Brodway has a grudge against any of us, he will carry out his threat—for his letter is a threat, nothing less. He is a vindictive animal. No, I don't see any chance, unless I had the luck to save the bank from being stuck-up,' he broke into a dreary laugh, 'and that sort of thing does not happen nowadays very often—at least not in a big place like this.'

'Not often, certainly,' agreed Lodge thoughtfully, then he also laughed softly to himself, and stood up. 'Well, suppose we toddle back now, Bob. You will want to look in at the Sheltons', and see what light they can throw on our friend Brodway's action. Bid Nettie "good-bye" for me, and tell her—never mind.'

'What? You don't mean to say you are leaving before the Thundagra races?'

'The races? I'd clean forgotten them!' exclaimed Lodge in an odd tone. 'They don't come off till Saturday week, however, and I'm going to-morrow.'

Ten days had passed since Alexander assumed charge of the Nawarra branch of the Southern Cross Bank.

It was the day of the races, and all the employes had taken advantage of the Saturday half-holiday to join the mixed crowd on the course. Only the manager and the teller remained, and both were in the inner private room together. The latter was preparing to go.

'Any one at the counter out there?' said Alexander suddenly, raising his head.

'No, Mr Alexander. Breddon was the last, and he went out ten minutes ago.'

'Just go and see, Stokes; I thought I heard'—

As he spoke the folding door was swung open, admitting a wave of heat, and a tallish man, masked and thickly bearded.

'Hands up!' he said in a harsh voice, covering the two men, who were standing together, with a revolver.

Stokes obeyed at once, but Alexander began to fumble in his desk, though he knew well that the revolver was kept in a drawer in the outer office.

'Hands up, I say!'

But Alexander still fumbled in his desk.

The robber paused for a moment, then fired at Alexander.

The ball cut hissing through the tepid atmosphere above the manager's head to imbed itself in the partition behind him.

At the same instant Alexander sprang out upon the man, and struck the pistol from his hand.

There was a short, sharp struggle, and then the masked figure was lying on the ground, with Stokes kneeling on his chest, while the manager easily freed his wrists from the weakening grasp upon them.

Brodway, Doctor English, and the police arrived simultaneously. They found Stokes still seated on the robber's body.

'I hit him over the heart and he collapsed at once,' explained that hero with much pride. 'But only for Mr Alexander tackling him so smartly,

we should not have had a chance of our lives, and he'd have bagged the coin—Teddington's lump too.

The doctor knelt down and hurriedly removed the mask, the beard coming off with it, and looked into the gray face with an unwonted throb at his heart.

'Mike Lodge!' almost screamed Brodway, in a frenzy of gratified malice. 'I always said so!'

'Never mind, Mr Brodway,' said the doctor sternly; 'he is beyond all human opinion now.'

There were many rumours about the attempted robbery of the bank. Some said Lodge was in difficulties—some said he had lost heavily at the races in the morning—most people agreed that he knew of Teddington's unusually large payments, and having a grudge against the firm for giving him the sack, as well as against the new manager of the bank, who was a more successful man than himself—he had resolved to settle up all old scores as well as annex the swag at one comprehensive swoop.

Alexander and the doctor walked back together from the funeral. That Alexander mourned for the dead as for a brother was plain.

'He was not at the races—he owed no man a penny—besides, he told me himself that his future was provided for, so it beats me to imagine what drove him to stoop to this wretched business,' Alexander began.

'Requiescat,' interposed the doctor abruptly, giving his companion a long questioning glance from under his thick brows. No, the dimmest idea of that wild self-sacrifice could never enter into this honest, narrow, conventional head. Well, he must keep silence too—for Lodge's sake.

'I hear you had good news this morning.'

'Yes. Brodway called and congratulated me before I left home.'

Then they parted. The doctor went on in silence for some distance, then suddenly raising his hat, he murmured, in a low voice, the old words:

'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.'

Another conversation took place in a moonlit garden that same evening.

'I once thought that he cared for you, Nettie.'

A sob came with the reply, 'Oh no.'

'And—and I was wretched,' ventured the lover, 'for I feared you might have grown to care for him, he was so'—

'Oh Bob, let the past alone!' broke out the girl passionately.

And so the poor tragedy of Mike Lodge's life ended.

Q U I T S.

Love looked at me with pleading eyes;

In scorn I turned away;

I would not hearken to the words

That he was fain to say.

Alas! 'tis I who now seek Love,

And seek him but in vain;

As I served Love, so Love serves me

With scorn and high disdain!

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

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TREE-CLIMBERS V. STEEPLE-JACKS.

A RECENT article in *Chambers's Journal* (6th June 1896), entitled 'Steeple-Jacks,' in which is explained the method adopted by those active gentry in their hazardous work of ascending the lofty chimneys of manufactories for the purpose of repair, has put me in mind of a somewhat similar method of climbing lofty trees employed by the Karens in the jungles of Burma.

In the course of my frequent wanderings in those jungles, I occasionally noticed a number of pegs stuck one above another high up in some huge tree. That they had been fixed there to help a man in climbing, and by the one who had so climbed, was evident, but in what way they could have been fixed, and how, after being so fixed, it was possible to climb by their means, I was at a loss to understand; because it was plain that, if used as steps for the feet, the weight of a man's body would deflect them, and the man would inevitably fall off, as they were but slender pegs, and had no visible support other than that given by the tree. The trees in which these pegs were seen were of great height and girth, sometimes eighty or a hundred feet from the ground to the first bough, and offered no projection of any kind which could be utilised by hand or foot, and were far too bulky to be clasped round. To give an idea of the size of some of these trees, I may mention that I once measured one that had fallen across a mountain-stream and thus afforded a good opportunity for accurate measurement, and I found it to be one hundred and forty feet to the first branch. All I could extract from my native followers, generally Burmans, in reply to my questions on the subject of the pegs, was that they were placed there by Karens to enable them to climb the tree to get at the wild bees' nests and take the honey.

So for a long time my curiosity remained unsatisfied. But eventually fortune favoured me. On a subsequent occasion, this time accompanied by a friend, I again caught sight of the familiar pegs, and pointed them out to

him; he was as puzzled as I had been to account for their position. It happened, however, luckily on this occasion that we had two or three Karens in our company, and they, when they were told of our surprise, offered to show us practically how the thing was done. We halted accordingly, and, sitting down, watched their proceedings with considerable interest. It was rather a lengthy business, and I will try to describe it, as it will probably prove as new to my readers as it was to ourselves.

The first thing done was to select and cut down two or three bamboos of suitable length and size, say thirty or forty feet long, and about as thick as a man's wrist or forearm, and then to cut and trim into shape several dozen bamboo pegs about a foot long. This done, and the material being now ready, the men proceeded to chop out a hole on both sides of the bamboo just above the *septum* (or joint, if you will) all the way along, sufficiently large to allow the pegs to be pushed through. And now the man who was to ascend the tree rested one of the bamboos against the trunk, having first cut a notch out of the top—the use of which will appear presently; then, filling his bag with the pegs, and having a piece of wood in his hand to serve as a mallet, he made preparation for the ascent in the following manner.

But here I must pause to describe the ordinary dress of a Karen; it will not take long, as it is simplicity itself, consisting, in fact, of only one garment, if we except the wisp of dirty cloth twisted into his long hair. This garment is for all the world like the old-fashioned, now long-discarded, agricultural labourer's smock-frock, but without sleeves, the arms being thrust through slits at the shoulders. This, with a large square bag, of the same home-made cotton material as the smock, hung by a broad strap across one shoulder, and the inevitable *dha* (a kind of long heavy chopper-knife) in his hand, forms a Karen's complete costume. All the Karens dress alike. This bag contains invariably the dearly-loved betel-nut, the prepared lime in

a small box, and the leaves of the betel-pepper (which, put together, he is constantly chewing), with any other trifles he may choose to carry with him. Approaching the tree, then, the Karen takes a peg out of his bag, and pushing it through the lowest hole in the bamboo, drives the sharpened end into the tree; then a second peg through the second hole, and so on upwards, a peg in every hole, as far as he can reach standing on the ground. Thus far all was easy enough; but at this point, as it appeared to us, the difficulty began. What would the man do next? There was no hesitation, however.

If I have succeeded in making myself understood, it will be apparent to the reader that the pegs, thus inserted, were supported at one end by the trunk of tree, at the other by the bamboo on the *septa* of which they rested; the trunk of the tree corresponding to one side-pole of a ladder, while the bamboo represented the other pole, the pegs themselves forming the rungs.

Without any hesitation the Karen put one foot on the lowest rung—there being just room for it between the tree and the bamboo—and, raising himself from the ground, he inserted and drove in a peg above the last which he had been able to put in while standing on the ground. Then, with his other foot on the next rung, he again drove in a peg higher up, and so on. Ascending rung by rung, he fixed peg after peg, one above another, until he had reached the top of the bamboo—that is, the end of the first pole. With increased interest and some nervousness, we watched to see what he could possibly do next, as the difficulty of farther ascent now seemed really insuperable. Still no hesitation. One of the men below handed him up a second bamboo in which holes as described had been already cut, taking the precaution first to make a notch at the *bottom* of it to correspond with and fit into the notch previously cut in the *top* of the first. This bamboo the man above took hold of, balancing and raising it perpendicularly hand-over-hand until he was able to place the bottom of it on the top of the first, notch in notch. He then proceeded to deal with this second bamboo exactly as he had done with the lower one, driving in pegs one by one as he went up step by step from the bottom to the top, where he now stood, quite at his ease apparently, ready to receive yet a third bamboo which his fellow below was preparing to reach up to him by himself going up the lower of the two already fixed. This, however, we would not allow: we had seen enough. Nothing further was to be gained, as the feat had been performed simply for our gratification, and we were heartily glad when we saw the man safe at the bottom again.

The mystery of the pegs was solved: those I had seen far up on a tree, here and there, were a few that had withstood decay after the bamboos had fallen or been removed, and probably had been in the tree for several years.

Now, I do not know if the extreme difficulty of the above-mentioned performance has been sufficiently realised. To us who witnessed it, it appeared wonderful—so much so, indeed, that had we been only told and not seen it, we should have been slow to credit the truth of the story.

It should be remembered that the bamboos were in no way fastened to the tree, because the

pegs had no heads to them and projected but a little way outwards. They did not act as nails, only as supports; consequently, had the climber, in any part of his ascent, leaned ever so little outwards instead of inwards and towards the tree, the bamboos must inevitably have slipped off the pegs and fallen, hurling the man to the ground. This appears to be the most astonishing part of the performance—I mean, the perfect balancing of himself on such an insecure foundation all the time his hands were occupied with building his own ladder!

It must be borne in mind, further, that the second bamboo was simply lodged loosely on the top of the first by a notch, and that the rungs were only sufficiently broad to allow one foot to rest on them at a time—that is, the distance between the tree and the bamboo was no more than the natural breadth of the foot; and again, that the man did his work hampered by his loose smock-frock. We remarked, indeed, that this seemed a hindrance to him, and we were told that it was only out of respect to us that he went up so clad, and but for our honoured presence he would have divested himself of his garment.

When all these conditions are considered, I think it will be admitted that the feat here performed by these half-civilised denizens of the jungle rivals, if it does not surpass, that of our steeple-jacks, who, though they may ascend to greater heights, are assisted in their work by all the machinery that science and long experience enable them to command.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER VI.—A NEW LEAF.

'THE Duke of St Osmund's and Mr Claude Lafont left town yesterday for Maske Towers, the family seat near Devenholme.' So ran the announcement in the morning papers of the next day but one; and the Duke was actually exploring his inheritance when it appeared.

Overnight the pair had arrived too late to see much more than the lofty, antique hall, and the respective rooms in which they were to sup and sleep; but the birds awoke Jack in the early morning, and he was up and out before seven o'clock.

As yet he had seen little that attracted him within, and at this hour he felt a childish horror of the dark colossal canvases overhanging the grand staircase and the hall; like the sightless suits of armour standing blind sentinel below, they froze him with the look of lifeless life about the grim, gigantic figures. He was thankful to see one of the great double doors standing open to the sun; it let him out into a stone portico loftier than the hall; and folding his arms across a cold balustrade, the whilom bushman looked forth between Corinthian columns like the masts of a ship, and was monarch of all he beheld.

A broad and stately terrace ran right and left below; beyond and below this, acres of the smoothest, greenest sward were relieved by a few fine elms, with the deer still in clusters about their trunks. The lawn sloped quietly to the verdant shores of a noble lake; sun and dew

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had dusted the grass with silver; sun and wind were rippling the lake with flakes of flame, like leaping gold-fish; and across the water, on the rising ground, a plantation of young pines ran their points into the radiant sky. These appealed to the Duke more than anything he had seen yet. His last bush hut had been built among pines; and such is the sentimental attraction of the human heart towards a former condition—good, bad, or indifferent, if it be but beyond recall—that the Duke of St Osmund's had to inspect that plantation before anything else. Leaving the Towers behind him, unnoticed and indeed forgotten, he crossed the lawn, skirted the lake, and plunged amid the pine-trees as his impulse beckoned; but on his way back, a little later, the mellow grandeur of that ancient pile broke in upon him at last; and he stood astounded in the wet grass, the blood of possession running hot in his veins.

The historic building stretched on this side for something like a quarter of a mile from end to end; here the blue sky sank deep between turret and spire; and there it picked out a line of crumbling battlements, or backed the upper branches of an elm that (from this point) cut the expanse of stone in two. It had grown out of many attempts in as many ages; thus, besides architectural discrepancies for the eyes of the few, the shading of the walls was as finely graduated as that of an aging beard, but the prevailing tint was a pearly gray, now washed with purple, and exquisitely softened by the tender haze still lingering in the dewy air. And from every window that Jack could see flashed a morning sun; for, as he stood and looked, his shadow lay in front of him along the milky grass.

To one extremity of the building clung an enormous conservatory, likewise ablaze from dome to basement; at the other, the dark hues of a shrubbery rested the eye; but that of the Duke was used to the sunlit desert, and not readily dazzled. His quick glance went like a bullet through the trees to a red gable and the gilt hands of a clock just visible beyond. On the instant he recovered from his enchantment, and set off for the shrubbery at a brisk walk; for he had heard much of the Maske stables, and evidently there they were.

As he was in the shrubbery the stable clock struck eight after a melodious chime sadly spoilt by the incessant barking of some small dog; the last stroke reverberated as he emerged; and the dog had the morning air to itself, to murder with its hideous clamour. But the Duke now saw the exciting cause, and it excited him; for he had come out opposite the stable-yard gates, which were shut, but from the top of which, with its lame paw lifted, a vertical tail, and a back like a hedgehog asleep, his own yellow cat spat defiance at an unseen foe. And between the barks came the voice of a man inciting the dog with a filthy relish.

'Set him off, Pickle! Now's your time. Try again. Oh, blow me! if you can't you can't, and I'll have to lend you a hand.'

And one showed over the gate with the word; but the fingers grabbed the air, for Jack had snatched his pet in the nick of time. He was now busy with the ring of the latch, fumbling

it in his fury. The breath came in gusts through his set teeth and bristling beard, like wind through a keyhole. One hand clasped the yellow cat in a fierce caress; the other knotted into a fist as the gate flew open.

In the yard a hulking, smooth-faced fellow, whose pendulous under-lip had dropped in dismay, changed his stare for a grin when he saw the Duke, who was the smaller as well as the rougher-looking man of the two; for he had not only come out without his collar, which he discarded whenever he could, but he had clapped on the old bush wideawake because Claude was not up to stop him.

'Well, and who are you?' began the other cheerfully.

'You take off your coat, and I'll show you,' replied Jack, with a bloodthirsty indistinctness. 'I'm a better man than you are, whoever I am; at least we'll have a see!'

'Oh, will we?' said the fellow. 'And you're the better man, are you? What do you think?' he added, turning to a stable-boy who stood handy with thin brown arms akimbo and thumbs in his belt.

'I wonder 'oo 'e thinks 'e is w'en 'e's at 'ome?' said the lad.

Jack never heard him. He had spied the saddle-room door standing open. In an instant he was there, with the small dog yelping at his heels; in another, he had locked the door between cat and dog, pocketed the key, and returned to his man, stripping off his own coat and waistcoat as he came. He flung them into a corner, and after them his bush hat.

'Now let's see you take off yours! If you don't,' added Jack, with a big bush oath, 'I'll have to hide you with it on!'

But man and boy had been consulting while his back was turned, and Jack now found himself between the two of them; not that he gave the lad a thought.

'Look you here; I'll tell you who I am,' said the man. 'My name's Matt Hunt, and Matt can fight, as you wouldn't need telling if you belonged to these parts. But he don't take on stray tramps like you; so, unless you hook it slipper, we're just going to run you out o' this yard quicker than you come in!'

'Not till I've shown you how to treat dumb animals'—

'Then here goes!'

And with that the man Hunt seized one of Jack's arms, while the stable-boy nipped the other from behind, and made a dive at Jack's pocket for the saddle-room key. But a flat-footed kick sent the lad sprawling without harming him; and the man was driven so hard under the nose that he too fell back, bearded with blood.

'Come on!' roared Jack. 'And you, my boy, keep out of the light unless you want a whipping yourself!'

He was rolling up the sleeves from his tanned and furry arms. Hunt followed suit, a cascade of curses flowing with his blood; he had torn off his coat, and a wrist-button tinkled on the cement as he caught up Jack in his preparations. His arms were thicker than the bushman's, though white and fleshy; but Hunt was also the heavier weight, with further advantages in point of height and reach; nor was there any lack of

confidence in the dripping, hairless, sinister face when the two men finally squared up.

They fell to work without niggling, for Jack rushed in like a bull, leading most violently with his left. It was an inartistic start; the big man was not touched; but neither did he touch Jack, who displayed at all events a quick pair of legs. Yet it was this start that steadied the Duke. It showed him that Hunt was by no means unskilled in the use of his hands; and it put out of his head everything but the fight itself, so that he heard no more the small tike barking outside the saddle-room door, hitherto his angriest goad. Some cool sparring ensued. Then Hunt let out from the shoulder, but the blow was avoided with great agility; then Jack led off again, but with a lighter touch, and this time he drew his man. The blows of the next minute it was impossible to follow. They were given and returned with enormous virulence; and there was no end to them until the big man tripped and fell.

'See here,' said Jack, standing over him; 'that was my cat, and I'd got to go for you. But if you've had enough of this game, so have I, and we'll cry quits.'

He was sucking a cut lip as he spoke. The other spat out a tooth and blundered to his feet.

'Quits, you scum? Wait a bit!'

And they were at hotter work than ever.

Meanwhile the yard was filling with stable-men and gardeners, who were in time to see Hunt striding down on his unknown adversary, and the latter retreating in good order; but the stride quickened, ending in a rush, which the Duke eluded so successfully that he was able to hit Hunt hard on the ear as he passed.

It was afterwards a relief to the spectators to remember how they had applauded this effort. To the Duke it was a comfort at the time, but he did not then suspect that his adversary was also his most unpopular tenant. For neither knew or cared who the other might be.

Hunt let out a bellow of pain, staggered, and resumed his infuriate rush; but his punishment was now heavier than before. He had lost both wind and head, and he was losing pluck. One of his eyes was already retiring behind folds of livid flesh; and a final blow under the nose, where the first of all had been delivered, knocked him howling into the arms of a new-comer, who disengaged himself as Hunt fell.

'What, Claude! is that you?' cried the Duke; and a flood of new sensations so changed his voice that Hunt looked up from where he lay, a beaten, bleeding, blubbing mass. But in the silent revelation of that moment there was at first no sound save the barking of the fox-terrier outside the saddle-room door. This had never ceased. Then the coachman's pipe fell from his mouth and was smashed.

'Bless us!' said he. 'It's his Grace himself!'

He had driven the Duke from Devenholme the night before.

'The Duke of St Osmund's!' exclaimed Hunt from the ground. He had been shedding blood and tears indifferently, and now he sat up with a slimy stare in his uninjured eye.

'Yes, that's right,' said Jack, with a nod to the

company. 'So now you all know what to expect for cruelty to cats, or any other dumb animals; and don't you forget it!'

He put on his coat and went over to the saddle-room. Claude followed him, still at a loss for words. And Hunt's dog went into a wild ecstasy as the key was put into the lock.

'Hold him,' said Jack. 'The dog's all right; and I lay his master'll think twice before he sets him on another cat o' mine!'

'Come away,' replied Claude hoarsely; 'for all our sakes, come away before you make bad worse!'

'Well, I will. Only hold him tight. That's it. Poor little puss, then—poor old Livingstone! Now I'm ready; come along.'

But Hunt was in their path; and Jack's heart smote him for the mischief he had done, though his own lower lip was swollen like a sausage.

'So you're the new Duke of St Osmund's,' said Hunt, with a singular deliberation. 'I wasn't to know that, of course; no, by gosh, not likely!'

'Well, you know it now,' was the reply. 'And—and I'm sorry I had to hit you so hard, Hunt!'

'Oh, don't apologise,' said Hunt, with a sneer that showed a front tooth missing. 'Stop a bit, though; I'm not so sure,' he added, with a glance of evil insight.

'Sure of what?'

'Whether you oughtn't to apologise for not hitting a man of your own age!'

'Take no notice of him,' whispered Claude strenuously; but he obtained none himself.

'Nonsense,' said the Duke; 'you're the younger man, at all events.'

'Not me! I was born in '59, I was.'

'Then you're the younger man by four years.'

'By—four—years,' repeated Hunt slowly. 'So you was born in '55! Thank you; I shall make a note of that, you may be sure—your Grace!'

And Hunt was gone; they heard him whistling for his tike when he was himself out of sight, and the dog went reluctantly. Then the coachman stepped forward, cap in hand.

'If you please, your Grace, that man was here without my knowledge. He's always putting in his nose where he isn't wanted. I've shifted him out of this before to-day; and, with your Grace's permission, I'll give orders not to have him admitted again.'

'Who is he?' said Jack. 'A tenant, or what?'

'Only a tenant, your Grace. Matt Hunt, they call him, of the Lower Farm; but it might be of Maske Towers, by the way he goes on!'

'He took a mighty interest in my age,' remarked the Duke. 'I never asked to look at his fangs—but I think you'll find one of them somewhere about the yard. No; I'm not fond of fighting, my lads. Don't you run away with that idea. But there's one thing I can't and won't suffer, and that's cruelty to animals. You chaps in the stables, recollect that! And so good-morning to you all.'

Claude led the way through the shrubbery in a deep depression. The guilty Duke took his arm with one hand, while with the other he hugged the yellow cat, which was watching the shrubbery birds wistfully over its master's shoulder.

'My dear old boy,' said Jack, 'I'm as sorry as

sorry for what's happened. But I couldn't help myself. Look at Livingstone; he'd have been a stiff 'un by this time if I hadn't turned up when I did; so naturally there was a row. Still, I'm sorry. I know it's a bad beginning; and I remember saying in the train that I'd turn over a new leaf down here. Well, and so I will if you give me time. Don't judge me by this morning, old toucher! Give me another chance; and for heaven's sake don't look like that!

'I can't help it, Jack,' replied Claude, with a weary candour. 'I'm prepared for anything now. You make me a year older every day. How do I know what you'll do next? I think the best thing I can do is to give you up as a bad job!'

(To be continued.)

A REVOLUTION IN PRINTING.

THE STORY OF THE LINOTYPE.

WHETHER or not the art of printing originated in China, and the notion of it was imported into Europe by some early traveller, we shall probably never know for certain. But that the Romans actually possessed the art without knowing it is evident from the fact that they stamped their pottery with immovable types, or stereotypes, as we now call them. But now that the art of printing is being revolutionised by a new and ingenious use of stereotypes, we seem yet to be uncertain who was really the first to print from movable types in Europe. It is, of course, usually set down to John (or Johann) Gutenberg of Mainz, who settled in Strasburg about the year 1424. He is called the inventor of typography, which is the art of printing with loose, separate types. But the Dutch assert that printing from types, as distinguished from blocks, was first achieved in Haarlem, and that Laurens Coster, otherwise called Laurentius, was the real inventor. It is contended that John Gensfleisch (or Gutenberg) was one of his workmen, and that on returning to Mainz he made his nephew, John Gutenberg, acquainted with the secret. The types used by Laurentius, however, seem to have been of wood. John Gutenberg the younger went to Strasburg, and began printing in the house of one Dritzehen, by a secret process. Dritzehen died, and some of his family, getting hold of the 'formes,' discovered Gutenberg's secret to be printing from movable metal types cut by hand. Gutenberg then went back to Mainz, and entered into partnership with one John Fust, or Faust, a goldsmith and metal-worker, who supplied the money for the typographical experiments. Somewhere between 1450 and 1455 they brought out what is now known as the Mazarin Bible, probably the first book ever printed from movable metal types. Gutenberg and Fust quarrelled, and Fust, being the capitalist, took possession of the whole printing apparatus, assuming as managing partner an apprentice of Gutenberg's named Peter Schöffer. To this young Schöffer, again, belongs the honour of discovering how to cast type in a matrix. With the siege of Mainz in 1462 the firm was broken up, and their apprentices and workmen became scattered over Europe, carrying with them the art of printing and of casting types. Before the end of the year 1500, printing-presses had been

set up in two hundred and twenty different places.

William Caxton is still believed to be the first who introduced the art of printing into England, although there is a book in existence which professes to have been printed at Oxford in 1468, which is three years prior to Caxton's first book. Whether or not Caxton was the first printer in England, he was the first to use cast-metal movable types here. It does not appear, however, that Caxton was like Gutenberg and his immediate successors in being his own type-founder. Caxton obtained his type from Bruges, where type-founding as a separate art and industry seems to have first settled; afterwards extending over the Continent, and through England and Scotland, where, perhaps, it attained its highest perfection. Among the earliest English type-founders Wynkyn de Worde was the most famous. He it was who first cut the English 'black letter' that served as a model for all future founders. One of the most famous printers of the sixteenth century, however, John Day, made his own types, and turned out very beautiful books. After his time there was little or no advance in the art of type-founding for about a hundred years. Then began a revolution and the successive development of machinery, until we have now an almost human machine that simply needs to be kept fed with molten metal while turning out automatically the most perfect type ready for the printer's hand.

In the British Museum is a Roman example of stereotype, or logotype. It is a brass plate about two inches long and one inch wide, bearing, in reverse, characters which represent the signature of Cecilius Hermias. It was evidently used for the signature of documents by stamping, as is done by many busy public officials in our own time. It is certainly curious that, with the art of writing, the taste for literary exercises, and the knowledge of means of reproducing written characters, the Romans should have stopped short of the art of printing. They had it, and they knew it not. This ink-stamp is of the fifth century, and not until the fifteenth do we find printing from movable types in Europe. If it is true that the Chinese practised printing three hundred years before Christ, then Christendom was eighteen hundred years behind Heathendom in the most essential art of civilisation. Happily, in the interim were what George Eliot calls the fine old days of leisure. Time was of small value, and the monks had little to do; so that, thanks to their leisure and patience, manuscripts were preserved, reproduced, and handed down from generation to generation.

If we take 1450 as about the time when Gutenberg successfully cast his first type, we have a period of four hundred and thirty-five years before the invention reached its natural development. Gutenberg, in 1450, cast single letters in a mould; and in 1885 Ottmar Mergenthaler cast lines of letters from a matrix. The American Linotype is the lineal descendant of the mould of Mainz. If it has taken a long time to develop, let us not forget how long it took to develop Gutenberg's movable type from the stamp of Cecilius Hermias.

The feature of the new era in printing is the production of letterpress printing without the

use of types at all. Just as there has been the substitution of mechanical for manual labour in type-founding, so now we are seeing the same change in type-setting. To those who know anything about a printing-office, no revolution can seem more complete than one which will employ a machine to do the delicate, dexterous work of the deft compositor in front of his font of types. If there is any industry in which the displacement of manual work seemed well-nigh impossible, it was the setting-up of type for the printing-press—and yet the deposition has begun.

The invention of the Linotype Composing-Machine marks a revolution greater than anything which has occurred in printing during the last four hundred years. It is neither the first nor the only attempt that has been made at what is called 'mechanical composition' as distinguished from ordinary type-setting by hand. But it is the first successful attempt, we believe, to combine type-founding with type-setting, and in point of fact to dispense with fonts of type altogether. And it is a proved success, both mechanically and economically. Even the trade unionists have recognised that the thing has 'come to stay,' and, adapting themselves to the situation, skilled compositors are as quickly as possible transforming themselves into skilful machine-operators.

The Linotype cannot be said to be the invention of any single individual. In its modern form it is a completion of the design of Ottmar Mergenthaler, but the machine in use to-day represents the product of no fewer than fourteen hundred separate patents. That is to say, it is the embodiment of successive improvements, found to be necessary after Mergenthaler's machine came into practical operation. But the idea itself is an old one—as old, one may say, as the stereotyped blocks with which the ancients stamped their pottery. It is a curious thought that on the eve of the twentieth century we are going back to the first, or even earlier, in principle. But without going so far back, we may find the germ of the Linotype in the Logotype which early in the present century found so much favour. The Logotype system was the cutting of blocks of complete words, sections of words, and syllables in frequent use, with the view of avoiding the handling of each separate letter every time these words and syllables are required. But it was found to multiply enormously, instead of to reduce, the number of characters required in a compositor's case, and to be unworkable on a large scale. The Oxford University Press, however, used logotypes, as did others engaged in such 'solid composition,' as the printing of Bibles. Just about the time when the Logotype came into favour, cylinder machines were taking the place of hand-presses, so that practically we may lay the foundation of modern mechanical composition in the first quarter of the present century.

First, however, the printing-machine had to be perfected, and the world was not ripe for an invention which one William Church patented in 1822 for the casting of type by machinery, the setting of it in line by machinery, and the automatic delivery by machinery of the printed sheets. In Church's machine of seventy-five years ago we have features which have been

preserved in all type-setting machines ever since, down to the Linotype, such as the keyboard, the arrangement in parallel lines, the use of release-levers and oblique channels to bring the types to a common point, &c. Other inventors followed Church, decade after decade, some with machines for setting type merely, some for casting as well as setting, and some for dispensing with type altogether and using a matrix. Some of these inventions were of no practical use; others of them have been in operation in this country and in America, but never with such unqualified success as to threaten to displace hand-labour. Then came the evolution of the bar-forming machine, which is really the Linotype.

The difference between the Linotype and all previous type-setting machines is material, for the Linotype does not set type at all. It does not compose types, but composes matrices in lines. In ordinary type the characters are in relief on the metal; in a matrix the characters are impressed in intaglio. This was the original thing about Mergenthaler's invention—the dispensing with a magazine, or font, of movable metal types. He had many imitators, but the Court of Appeal in the United States found that he was really the first to 'combine with mechanism for forming a matrix composed of a series of dies adapted for transposition or rearrangement, a mould and a casting mechanism,' and the first to 'produce a practical machine by which ordinary hand composition is superseded.'

The Linotype does not cast letters, it casts lines: hence its name, 'line-of-type.' It has taken twenty years and fourteen hundred patents to bring the machine up to its present state, which may not yet be perfection, but yet is so efficient that it is being adopted in all the principal newspaper offices in the country, and gradually in the great printing-houses. It was unfortunate, perhaps, in being placed on the market too soon, for the first machines were not a success, and caused rather a prejudice against the name—a prejudice which has had to be overcome.

The mechanical compositor has no heavy cases of type to pick and choose from. He sits in front of a machine so compact that it does not occupy more than six square feet of floor-space. Before him is a key-board, not unlike that of a type-writer. When he depresses a key he instantaneously releases a matrix in the magazine above him, bearing a character corresponding to the key. This magazine is placed sloping downwards towards the operator, and the matrices as released drop by natural gravity through vertical channels on to a travelling belt, which carries them as quick as thought, one after the other, into a little compartment on the operator's left, where they 'compose' the words under his eye. The side of this little chamber is open, and on the portion of the matrices exposed to view the characters they represent are marked. In this way the operator can at once detect any literal error as it occurs, extract the wrong matrix and insert the correct one in an instant, without stopping the machine. When the little chamber, or block, which is adjusted to the width of the column to be printed, is about full it announces the fact by ringing a bell, thus giving the operator time to see how much more he can get in. Then by the touch of

a lever the operator sends the line on a stage to the moulding wheel, connected with which is a pot of molten metal, kept hot by gas-burners. Half a turn of this wheel forces out a charge of molten metal and presses it into the incised letters on the matrices. The line is thus cast in an instant in a single solid bar. An arm now comes down with a swoop from the top of the machine, seizes the matrices and places them on a distributing bar, perhaps the most wonderful part of the machine, and almost human in its intelligence. Each matrix is a thin piece of brass, and on the opposite end to the letter is toothed something like a Chubb's lock, and by means of these teeth it hangs on to corresponding teeth on the bar, along which the matrices are forced by a worm-wheel. At intervals there are vacancies on the bar, and a matrix on reaching one of these vacancies loses its grip there and drops into its own proper groove, and runs into the magazine ready for use again. No matrix can drop off the bar until it reaches its own box, nor can it be carried beyond, for the slightest disturbance of the adjusted teeth causes the machine to stop.

Now to come back to the cast 'line-of-type.' The mould-wheel, in returning to position after having ejected the metal, forces the line or bar out into a receiving galley, where a little automatic arm holds all the lines in position until the 'take' is full—say one hundred lines or so. Then the operator lifts it out, sends it away for proof, and starts at once on his next 'take.' The movement is continuous. While he is setting one line of type by his key-board, another is being cast, and the matrices are being redistributed as fast as he can use them. At the side of his key-board is a little lever by which he introduces space-bands to divide the words. These bands are of tapering thickness, so that the spaces can be made as close or as wide as desired, and all is done as smoothly and effectively as if by the human hand. This automatic justifying is a thing that used to be accounted an impossibility, but it is done, and all because matrices are used instead of metal types.

But it is practically impossible by mere verbal description to give an adequate representation of this marvellous machine, which comprises two thousand separate pieces of mechanism. It is a combination of the ideas of many minds adjusted to this particular purpose. Seated at his key-board, the modern printer is both machinist, type-setter, justifier, type-founder, and type-distributor. Motive-power is supplied to him by shafting from some central steam or gas engine, and all he has to do is to manipulate his key-board and keep his melting-pot supplied with metal, while, of course, using his eyes to see that the right matrices are coming into position. The old type-setting machines required three operators, one for the key-board, one to keep up the supply of type, and one to 'justify' the lines.

Into the technical questions of cost and relative quality of work this is not the place to enter. Probably the machine has not been sufficiently long in use to afford positive and precise answers on these points. The saving, of course, is in the labour, which means wages, and the amount of that saving must depend on the skill and rapidity of the individual operators. To transform a

compositor into a machine-operator is a work requiring some little time, and probably the next generation of operators will be much more expert. It is claimed that matter can be linotyped from six to ten times more rapidly than the most expert compositor can set up types in his composing-stick, and it is stated that the saving in cost is or should be about 40 per cent. Each machine is capable of turning out fourteen thousand letters per hour; but no operator can keep up such a speed; and from eight thousand to ten thousand per hour seems to be about the output of an expert, while even beginners are soon able to do six thousand, at all events from reprint copy.

One objection offered to the Linotype is with regard to corrections and alterations. An operator can correct his own errors before casting the bar, but for corrections made on the proof, the line must be reset and recast. This, however, is not so serious a matter as it seems, and the whole process does not occupy longer than for a compositor to correct his movable types. And the metal of a spoilt bar is not lost—it is simply thrown into the melting-pot and used over again.

In a general way, it may be said that a Linotype operator ought to be able to produce as much matter in an hour as a typewriter. At any rate, here we have an invention of world-wide importance, inasmuch as it undertakes to expedite and economise in a hitherto unattained manner the dissemination of literature. Up till now it has been chiefly applied to newspaper printing, because of its supposed limitations. But there are those who confidently predict the universal use of machine composition even for the finest book-work, with a consequent further cheapening of literature—marvellously cheap as it is already. Whatever is to be its own future, however, the Linotype has upset the time-honoured industries of the type-founder and the type-setter, and has inaugurated an entirely new era in the history of printing.

A BY-WAY TO FORTUNE.

I.

THOUGH the affair attracted much interest at the time, and many reports, some of them highly imaginative, were circulated through the district, there is, I believe, no one so competent to give a plain, substantial account as myself; for I was present at the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last scene.

'It all comes along of this new eddication,' said the village cronies (we were in the fifties then). 'If he hadn't a' been eddicated, he couldn't a' done it.'

'Eddication' or no, the news fell like a thunderbolt on our country-side: the Squire's house broken into, his old butler wounded, and, chief of all, the famous diamonds stolen! Simple folk could scarcely realise a parallel audacity; as for our village constable, he was fathoms out of his depth even in the shallows of such a mystery. Special men came down from London for the case, and, after a month's silence, a development was arrived at.

Many years have passed—more, indeed, than I care to reckon—since that eventful afternoon, yet the memory of it still lingers with me vividly, for I was but a stripling at the time, and unused to the harsh realities of the world.

Picture to yourself an autumn day, quiet on the ear, but raw and damp to one's flesh, with little drops of water hanging from every brown leaf, and clouds of steam rising from the horses' backs, and behind them your servant, ploughing alone in a far outlying field. There could be few more solitary tasks, for, the place being remote and wild, you might work there a year and a day without hearing the sound of a man's voice. At the bottom of the field ran a strip of wood about three hundred yards wide, and extending a mile or so up the valley. As I plodded slowly in the furrow, I whistled to myself for company's sake, and had thus got well into the swing of my labour, when, turning on one headland, I caught sight of three figures creeping down the field under the shelter of the opposite hedge. As they reached the spot to which my ploughing led me they halted, and watched my steady progress across the field towards them. They were fine, strong men, I noted, respectably clad in sober-coloured clothes. Inexperienced as I was, in their stalwart upright bearing, the squareness of their shoulders, their heavy clean-shaved jaws and fixed expression, I recognised, through the civilian attire, that most curious and at times terrible product—the disciplined man. As I drew my horses up, one, who appeared the leader, and carried, I remember, a smart little cane, which he bent before him in both hands, spoke to me.

'Farmer Hazlitt's son, I believe?' he said.

I replied that was so.

'Well, Mr Hazlitt, your father,' he continued, 'down at the farm, told me you would give some information.'

I was at his disposal, I said.

He kept under the hedge, and spoke in a low tone, yet the words were distinct, and his manner to the point.

'First then, is that Croomley Wood?' he asked, pointing to the lower side of the field where the land sloped into the valley.

'Yes,' I answered.

'Do you know it well?'

'As well as any person in the parish, for very few go there save the gipsies for firewood.'

'How many paths are there in it?' was his next question.

'Only one.'

'Could a man push through it elsewhere?'

'It is possible, of course,' I said; 'but you would hear him half a mile off.' He appeared pleased at my answers, and nodded a sharp 'Good.'

'Now, where does this single path run?' starting again.

'About six yards in the wood from the bottom of this field.'

'Then if I stand down there I cannot miss seeing or hearing any one who passes through the wood.'

'No,' I replied.

'And if any one comes from that direction'—he pointed across the valley—it will be also impossible?'

'Yes; but in that case,' I added, 'I should

myself catch a glimpse of them from here, as the path rises almost out of the wood for a few yards at one place.'

'Good,' he said once more; 'it is a pleasure to question you, Mr Hazlitt. One thing more let me beg of you, and that is to oblige me by going on with your plough as if you had not seen us. A look, a word from you at a critical point might spoil one of the prettiest bits of work ever put up.'

I said he might rely on me.

'If you see anything, don't see anything, but keep your horses moving,' were his last rather enigmatical words.

They went, falling naturally in step and in line, down the hedge, whilst I pulled my team round for another turn, and so had my back to them till I had crossed the field. When I again faced in their direction, I saw that they were concealed at various distances along the top of the wood, and that two comrades of the same substantial build had joined them, making in all five. Journeying from headland to headland in the usual stolid fashion of men that follow the plough, I could not help fancying that I was in a manner playing the part of decoy to some unsuspecting wretch; but, reflecting it was none of my business, I persevered on my way to and fro. Thus about two hours passed. What happened then?—nothing but the crowing of a cock pheasant, answered almost immediately by a rival from another part of the wood. Had not my eye chanced to rest at that moment on the only one of the five watchers distinctly visible to me (the man whose questions I had answered) the thing would have passed me unnoticed. He (the watcher) had made himself fairly comfortable even among the dripping branches, with the smart cane stuck in the ground before him, and a short pipe in his mouth. On the first pheasant-call he put the pipe smartly in his pocket and changed his position stealthily to one of extreme readiness. So long as I faced towards the wood I could, of course, be keenly on the alert without betraying it; but in the return furrow this was impossible save by breaking my promise in looking round. I resisted the temptation till half-way across, when an uncontrollable impulse led me to drop one of the lines and thus obtain an opportunity of glancing behind me. It was the affair of a moment, it is true, but I saw the figure of a woman sitting hurriedly along the wood-path; she carried a small basket under her arm. 'Martha Foster—Ned the poacher's wife,' rose instinctively to my lips. Another yard and she was hidden by a thicket. I was so surprised that I made no attempt to continue ploughing, but stood staring at the opening through which I had seen her. A deep and, to me, solemn silence reigned; then a startled magpie fled chattering from the branches, followed almost immediately by the shrill scream of a woman, and a yell, half rage, half defiance, so intense, so savage, that I scarcely thought it came from a man, but rather from some wild animal at bay. Scream after scream thrilled me as, leaving my team, I rushed down to the wood. At a broadening of the path three figures were struggling with a prostrate man; two others held a woman back, who clawed and shrieked like a fury; on the ground lay her basket, with the food it contained scattered

and trodden in the drifts of damp, sodden leaves. There was a sharp metallic click, and the three stalwart men rose, leaving their prisoner handcuffed on his face.

'Come, missus, be reasonable,' said the leader; 'you'll only do him harm now.'

Even she cowered before their calm, machine-like impassibility, and her cries subsided to a low moaning. They lifted Ned Foster to his feet, put their clothes, disordered and muddy from the encounter, to rights, lit their pipes, and exchanged a few words, such as: 'Smart bit of business; 'Very pretty indeed; 'Glad to hear that pheasant-call,' and so forth. 'Now then, my lads, fall in and let's be marching,' said the leader, picking up his cane.

Since his capture Ned Foster had preserved a sullen silence, but now he growled out: 'What's this along of, mates?'

'Squire Venne's diamonds and wounding his butler,' was the brief reply. 'Come, best foot forward, or we shan't reach in till dark.'

Before they left the fields to enter the closed-in lanes, Ned Foster turned for one last look at a white cottage standing alone in the fields across the valley, whence the woman had come bringing the food that led to his capture—the home which should know him no more. But his wife, following last and unguarded—for they had no fear of her attempting to escape—let her eyes wander neither to the right nor left, nor indeed ever lifted them from the prisoner, who, with hands crossed before him, strode doggedly beside his captors.

Thus the curtain falls on Alpha, the first scene in this history. Before telling the second and final, I must pause to give a few, very few words of explanation.

Squire Venne was a gentleman of ancient family, moderate estates, and emphatic pretensions to social position. There were two things for which the Vennes had, during many years, been distinguished, both to their county friends and to our village folks—first, their chronic impecuniosity, and the straits they were often put to as a result; secondly, the famous family diamonds, which Mrs Venne wore on every possible occasion, to the great comment of other county ladies. Many a time had financial storms arisen, which threatened to swamp Squire Venne and his house for ever, unless the famous jewels were sacrificed to still the troubled waters. Yet when all seemed lost through this unaccountable obstinacy, at that very moment, by some mysterious negotiations, other expedients were always found; and though report often had it that at last the diamonds had been sold, with the next Hunt Ball Mrs Venne was again the envy of her neighbours.

The surprise in the village at the capture of the poacher was very great, for it was not thought even that he was in the district, as he had set out (it was now remembered against him) with great ostentation up-country in search of work a week before the robbery, and had not been seen since. Having always been a morose, sullen man, not much pity was felt for him by his neighbours, though a distinct note of elation might be generally observed that, after all, the affair was the result of local talent.

Ned Foster was in due time tried, convicted, and sentenced to be transported; the evidence of his

guilt was absolutely conclusive. Martha Foster, against whom lay nothing beyond taking food to her husband, was discharged, when she returned to live alone in the old white cottage.

So far success had attended the efforts of the police, but one important feature of the case remained unsolved—the jewels had not been traced. Fragments of their mountings were found on the person of the prisoner, yet threat or promise was alike powerless to induce him to disclose his knowledge or produce any effect save a savage snarl at their impotence. The prevailing impression was, that he had a confederate in some accomplished rogue, who was doubtless the designer of the whole plot, and who had undertaken the disposal of the gems. Precautions were therefore taken by the officials to keep a watch on all known channels through which such goods might be expected to pass—as I have said without result.

In spite of this fact, Squire Venne used every influence he possessed to obtain a mitigation of the sentence. It was, he said, a painful thing to him to feel a fellow-creature doomed to the horrors of transportation for those wretched jewels. This also was in vain; and so Ned Foster was buried under the shadow of the convict prison in the prime of his life, whilst the famous diamonds remained securely concealed from the world's eyes. Winter drew to summer, and summer in turn to winter, and so many times over, till people forgot the great robbery at the Hall, or, if they did recall it, were doubtful whether it happened in the year '55 or '53; and still the convict worked out his punishment, and still the diamonds glittered unseen, unknown, from their hiding-place.

II.

It is a long *entr'acte* to my second scene—fifteen years. In such a space changes come to even a country village. Time did not spare ours. Martha Foster had died; the close of her life was passed in solitude, half forced on her, half sought, but utter and complete. The white cottage had fallen into ruins; doors, window-frames, and later even rafters were burnt by wandering gipsies on their camp-fires; cattle sought shelter in it from rain and sun; over the hearth a stout elderberry-tree shot up, showing its branches above the four bare walls that alone remained partly intact; in the garden before the house rabbits from Croonley Wood sported at dusk—they had little to fear now from Ned Foster, the poacher. Yet, if in some places age, decay, and death had sown their desolation, in others the signs of new work and progress appeared: a school, a public-house, a railway, marked their different aspects. It was from the nearest station on this line that I found myself trudging one dark night. The season was a rainy one, I remember; the day, like many of its fellows, showery, and though it was fine when I left the little platform, the clouds now threatened an outburst at any moment. I am not a timid man, yet many times in that walk through the wet, muddy lanes I glanced over my shoulders uneasily into the darkness. I fancied continually that I caught the sound of footsteps at a measured distance behind me; pausing to listen, there was nothing but a tremulous rustling of leaves before the rain. About a mile from home I reached a field-path

in crossing which a considerable saving in time and labour could be effected by those who knew it well enough to travel by night. After a moment's hesitation—for the nervous feeling still had a grip of my mind—a few large spots of rain urged me to immediate decision; so, leaving the road, I pushed on at a swinging stride along the lonely footpath. Down came the rain in heavy thunder-drops. Recalling thankfully that my way led by the ruined poacher's cottage, I quickened pace and neared the four bare walls at a run. Had I gone inside there would have been more shelter, but the darkness of the interior looked so blank and eerie that I merely crouched under the outside masonry, comforting myself with the thought that the shower would probably be as short as it was fierce. I might have stood there five minutes, when a noise, the clink of a nailed boot on stone, startled me. Peering in through an opening where two of the walls had gaped apart, I saw, to my astonishment, a faint light shining. This speck, growing larger and brighter, resolved itself into a candle flickering from a nook of the dilapidated fireplace; beside it, as if waiting for the feeble wick to gather force, stood two men. A tangled mass of creepers drooped across the gap in the sides of the cottage, and enabled me to watch intently their movements without much risk of being observed; for which, when the light fell more strongly on them, I felt very grateful, as their appearance did not invite confidence. Beyond this one mutual trait, they were types of men as unlike as possible. The nearest to me was of small build, unmistakably Jewish in countenance, and dressed in shabby smart clothes, from which he now scraped recent mud-splashes carefully; the other had a powerful frame, a hard worn face, wild eyes, and unkempt grizzly hair. He looked like some ragged outcast, and carried, I noticed with alarm, a short iron bar. This man stood shading his eyes with one hand, whilst he gazed round the deserted home.

'To come to this!' he said in a hoarse voice.

There was a long silence, broken at length by the other. 'Hold up, my friend; you learnt what to expect,' he said, flicking himself with a red silk handkerchief.

'They told me that she was dead; they told me the old house was fallen; but could a man a' believed this?—trees growing from the hearth, beasts of the field treading through it as they will.' His voice rose in pitch at each word.

'Hush! somebody might hear us, my friend; you know we have got better work on hand to-night than crying over spilt milk.' He spoke with a cunning power in his voice.

'Ay, you're right, my lad,' cried the elder man, his voice changing at once; 'that's all gone and done with. I've paid the price—fifteen years of hell, and this'—he waved his hand round the ruins; 'but it's my turn at last. Such sparklers, my lad, such sparklers!'

'Now you are talking like a man should,' approved the other, nodding his head, 'so let's get to business; that fool in front of us on the road has delayed it more than enough already.'

This was the home-coming of Ned Foster, and thus I chanced to be a spectator of the sequel to the great diamond robbery.

At the Jew's last request, Ned Foster now took

a step forward, then stared round the four tumble-down walls in a vacant, bewildered fashion.

'Well, what's the matter now?' asked the Jew in a querulous tone.

'It is all so broken down, there's no trace even of the stairs. I can't fix the spot.'

His companion bit his lips in vexation, but replied in the same cool, even manner: 'Come, pull yourself together, friend; this is no way of doing business. You buried them under a flag at the bottom of the stairs, you say?'

The returned convict nodded.

'Can you remember where these stairs stood?'

'Between the two rooms about here, I think.' He walked two-thirds down the cottage and hesitated.

'Well, then, one room must have been much larger than the other,' said the little man, closing his eyes shrewdly.

'No, they were both about the same size; leastways this was a bit the biggest,' replied Ned Foster, pointing helplessly to the smaller third of the interior which he had marked as cut off by the stairs. From his dazed expression it was plain to me that his memory had almost entirely given way. The Jew jumped up in a sudden paroxysm of rage. 'You fool,' he shrieked, 'if the stairs are where you have placed them, how can that be the largest room?'

There was a long pause while Ned Foster rubbed his forehead despondently, and the other paced up and down to regain composure.

'Come, this is no way of doing business, friend,' again said the Jew. He scanned the convict's face long and thoughtfully, after which he started the most extraordinary cross-examination I have ever heard, putting one question after another, and perceiving the coming answer so rapidly that the man before him had not time to form his words ere he anticipated them and passed to another query. They ran something after this: 'Now, friend,' in a sharp voice, 'which room did you live in? which room did you see the light in of nights when you came home from work? This, you say,' as they walked to the end of the cottage indicated. 'Now where did you have your table? In the middle of the room?—right, friend. When you sat at your supper, were you near the fire? About a yard and a half off, was it? Very well, then, we may put one side of the table here.' He marked the distance off from the old hearth by a stone. 'How broad was this table? A little over a yard, you think, friend.' He again placed a stone to mark it. 'Now was there anything between this side of the table and the wall? A dresser where your wife kept her crockery?—good. Could you pass easily between this dresser and the table? Yes. Well, we will give it this much, and, adding a yard for the width, it will bring the wall here,' placing another stone.

So, after similar measurements in all directions and innumerable questions, a complete ground-plan of the cottage was obtained, and finally a certain spot located under which the Jew confidently asserted was the particular flag-stone they required.

The consternation of the convict had now left him; a feverish eagerness prevailed in its stead, and he fell to the excavation of earth and fallen masonry, which had accumulated to some depth

over the stone floor of the cottage. It was heavy work, and the single tool they had was of little assistance to them; so, unwilling as he seemed to be, the worker was soon compelled to relinquish the task to his companion, who continued it in a much more leisurely style. Ned Foster now squatted down, holding the candle, and presently, when his breath had returned, spoke again:

'When I remember all I've gone through for these diamonds and how little you've done, it makes me wonder how I ever came to share 'em with you,' he said, musing gloomily.

The Jew straightened his back for a moment as he replied, contemptuously, 'You—what can you do without me, friend? Get caught over the first stones; get a shilling where I can give you a pound. Where would you have been just now if not for me?' He spat as if disgusted, and resumed his work. The convict continued to mumble and wink at the candle till he spoke aloud once more:

'I don't go back on taking you in; it's only—only'—

'Only what, friend?'

'Only, if you should try to cheat me over them, my lad,' his voice going very low, 'nothing could save you or hide you from me or keep me off you. I've waited fifteen years for these, I'd wait fifty for you. I'd have your blood if I followed you to'—

'Come, friend, what's the good of going into all this?' interrupted the Jew; 'it's not business, I say.' He spoke soothingly, but the gleam of his black eyes flashed to where I stood.

Presently, when they had dug down about two feet, I caught the ring of iron on the flags.

'Let me come down to it now, do you hear?' shouted the elder man so eagerly as almost to threaten.

'Just as you please, friend,' was the cool reply; 'you could have done it all if you liked. Have we hit the right flag-stone?'

Ned Foster nodded—he seemed too full for speech—and began to use the bar as a lever, for which purpose it had evidently been brought. The stone was soon prized up, and going down on his knees, he burrowed in the earth underneath with his hands. First he drew out a rust-eaten gun-barrel; then a bundle of game-wires, the rotting pegs still dangling from them; after that the gun-stock, and a steel gin or two. On each of these coming to light they laughed excitedly; but a long, anxious silence followed as he searched for something lying still deeper. It was a strange scene: the two men in this desolated house, through which the candle shed a quivering light, throwing up vividly the dark alert features of the Jew who held it, whilst it imparted an odd, fantastic appearance to the other's bent figure, half hidden in the earth; the whole framed by the outside darkness and the stillness of night, for the rain had long ceased.

Suddenly Ned Foster sprang up with a cry, grasping a battered tin shot-flask. I could hear the rattle of hard objects inside. His senses seemed to leave him, and he ran to a corner by himself, clutching the canister to his body, as if afraid the air might rob him of his treasure. The Jew's face had flushed too in the first moment, but he sneered now at his companion's frenzy, and without a word started to push the earth and flag-

stone into the hole. Meanwhile the convict, recovering somewhat from his overpowering emotion, knelt down where the earth was smooth, and pulling a dirty rag from his pocket, spread it out before him; then he twisted the top from the shot-flask, and poured the diamonds glistening one by one on the rag. Every now and again I caught a sparkle as the candle-flame trembled in the air. This sight overcame the apparent indifference of the Jew, for he drew near and watched the little heap grow slowly larger with a fascinated gaze.

'How many more have you got there, friend?' he asked almost in a whisper, as the other paused and looked up in his face.

'More—twice as many—three times as many.' He shook the flask and laughed.

I don't think that the past fifteen years and the ruin they had brought with them weighed on the convict's mind at that moment. The man standing knelt down beside him, and taking a few stones in his hand, examined them with the air of an expert, the other eyeing him suspiciously.

A long, a very long pause ensued. At length the Jew regained his feet. As he turned, I was almost startled into an exclamation that must have betrayed me, his features had such a ghastly expression. He took two or three hasty turns up and down, and pulling a bottle from his coat, gulped down the contents like a man with a fever thirst on him. Ned Foster's eyes never shifted, but still no word was uttered.

'Friend,' said the Jew at length, 'do you know what share of those stones I want?'

There was no reply.

'I don't want one, not one; you can keep 'em all,' he snarled, showing his teeth.

Still no answer, but the convict ran his hand through the stones; it seemed as if he failed to understand the words spoken to him.

'I am counted a good judge by my friends in the trade,' continued the Jew, 'and I think if you sell them well—very well, mind—they will about pay your fare to London. I shall try and find the way back myself. Don't ever come near me again. I might—I might do you harm, my friend.' He stepped out into the darkness with the most venomous contortion in his face human creature ever bore. As for Ned Foster, he took not the slightest notice, but continued to play with the spurious gems, uttering at intervals a low, gleeful laugh.

I comprehended then how Squire Venne had managed to pay his debts, and enable his wife still to wear diamonds, if only of paste.

Thus ended Omega, the final scene of this tragedy; what remains is of the simplest. In one of Squire Venne's almshouses lived for a few years a broken old man, oblivious of all—name, birth-place, career—whose sole remaining impulse was to guard and surreptitiously play with a handful of paste diamonds. To the day of his death none save the squire, himself an aged man, and the writer, recognised in him Ned Foster, the ex-convict. He lies buried by his faithful wife, Martha.

By-ways to fortune, easier-travelling, shorter though they may seem than the high-road, 'the straight way and the true,' along which slow and honest folk plod, generally turn out very rough

and tortuous paths indeed, their wayfarers often losing themselves in a valley, misty at its mouth, and ending in a great darkness.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE close of the year 1896 has been rendered memorable by the introduction in our streets of the horseless vehicle. Considering the state of the roads and the adverse weather conditions, the race of these vehicles to Brighton must be regarded as a success; and it is certain that many of them attained a high, indeed a dangerous rate of speed, compelling expert riders on bicycles to fall very quickly into the rear. The spectacle was a remarkable one, if only on account of the vast interest it excited, as was evident from the tens of thousands of spectators who lined the roads through which the vehicles sped. These auto-cars are of all sorts and sizes, and now that excitement has been allayed by their appearance in such variety, people will be interested in watching that process which is inseparable from all things human, the survival of the fittest.

In this connection, and as supplementary information to the article in last month's *Journal* on 'Mechanical Power for Tramways,' the remarkable offer made to Glasgow Corporation Tramways is worthy of attention. Mr George Johnston, of 94 Hope Street, Glasgow, in conjunction with Sir William Arrol, of Forth Bridge fame, has offered to equip every tramway route in that city with cars driven by mechanical traction, and to run these for a period of seven years, at a cost to the tramway department not exceeding what it at present pays for horse haulage. At the end of seven years the promoters undertake to hand over to the Corporation, as a free gift, the whole of the cars with their motors, in good working condition, and free of any charge for royalties. It is calculated that horse haulage costs £100,000 per annum. Should the Corporation decide, after a month's trial, that the cars are unsuitable, they shall be withdrawn, and the community held in no way responsible for the expenditure incurred. The committee seem to have been predisposed in favour of the overhead electric wire system. As soon as the home and foreign patents are completed, a description of this new motor will be forthcoming. It is, we understand, an oil engine, of entirely novel description, which minimises the trouble with obnoxious vapours, and electricity is substituted for ordinary flames, to ensure combustion. The motor is very light, and runs at high speed, while all the mechanism which is required is carried on a four-wheeled bogey below the car; and this bogey is free to adjust itself to the various curves round which the car is passing. Further developments of this motor will be awaited with interest.

Another improvement in electric traction is reported from Liverpool. Mr Alderman Snape draws our attention to a 'Simplex Electric Conduit' traction for tram-cars just invented, which promises to overcome some of the difficulties connected with underground electric traction on tramways, and for which an experimental line has been laid down at Prescot, near Liverpool. For this system it is claimed that it has all the

advantages of the overhead-wire system, without its attendant inconveniences. The line looks like the ordinary Liverpool tramway lines, save that in place of one of the rails a 'split' or double rail is substituted, the aperture or slot permitting the electrical collector of the car to make contact with the copper cable or electrical conductor concealed from view in a conduit beneath the rail. The initial cost of laying this tramway is, of course, greater than that of the overhead system; the cost of working it will be, it is promised, less by about threepence per mile per tram-car than with horse traction.

Those who are accustomed to the use of toilet requisites, even if they confine their attention to simple violet powder, should note that at a recent conference of hairdressers certain statements were made which are worthy of their attention. First, with regard to that same innocent violet powder which is so largely used by ladies, and which is showered so plentifully on the tender skin of infants of both sexes, we learn that it is no longer composed of rice, but is often a mixture in varying proportions of white lead, chalk, starch, and alabaster. The hairdressers express a hope that the sale of this noxious stuff should be prohibited; and the *British Medical Journal* backs them up with the useful suggestion that the chief constituents of every cosmetic sold should be stated on its box or bottle. It is well known that the application of metallic ingredients such as arsenic and lead will often lead to paralysis of certain groups of muscles, one reported case being that of paralysis of the muscles on one side of the neck from the use of a hair-dye containing lead. It is stated, too, that some years ago, in a village in Essex, a number of children died through using a violet powder, which, on analysis, was found to contain 38 per cent. of white arsenic.

There is a widely-spread belief that good horses, when they die, go, not to Paris, but to some Continental town, where their bodies are boiled down into 'Extract of Beef.' A representative of the *London Daily Mail* recently determined to test the truth of this oft-repeated tale, and has found it to be false. Following a horse which was shipped to Rotterdam for this alleged purpose, he found that the animal was taken with others to the public abattoir there, and at once slaughtered. Those which were sound were sold on the spot to the local horse-butchers. He then obtained a certificate from the director of the abattoir stating that all horses shipped from England to Holland are treated in this way, and that there is not to be found in the whole country a single factory where extract of horse-flesh is made.

A most interesting account of the Kimberley diamond-mines was recently given by Professor W. Crookes, F.R.S., at the Imperial Institute, in the first of a series of lectures dealing with that important subject. In the course of his remarks, the lecturer stated that Natal contained more coal than Britain owned before a single bucket had been raised. Professor Crookes had studied diamonds scientifically for twenty years past, and he had lately spent nearly a month at Kimberley, the centre of the diamond-producing area. This place was more than four thousand feet above the sea-level, the country all round about being denuded of trees on account of the great quantity of timber used in constructing the mines. The five most

famous of these mines were comprised in a circle of three and a half miles diameter, and the diamonds were found in 'pipes' or volcanic 'necks' of irregular shape and of unknown depth. These necks were filled with a heterogeneous mixture of about eighty different minerals, which resulted in a hard mass, or 'blue clay,' in which the diamonds were embedded. Before the accidental discovery of these pipes there was no indication above-ground of the vast treasures which lay stored below, the enormous value of which might be appreciated when it was stated that two claims, measuring sixty-two by thirty-one feet, worked to a depth of a hundred and fifty feet, had yielded 28,000 carats of diamonds. At present the diamond industry was chiefly confined to the neighbourhood of Kimberley, but recently a 'pipe' had been discovered forty miles off.

In issuing regulations for the keeping, conveyance, and use of 'mineral spirit' (petroleum) in connection with light locomotives, the Home Secretary calls attention to the dangers which may arise from the careless use of the more volatile descriptions of petroleum to which the rules apply. Persons who have had no experience of chemical laboratory work do not readily understand that some of these volatile liquids give off an inflammable vapour which will travel to and take fire at a flame which may be several feet away from the vessel in which the liquid is stored. This vapour, moreover, forms with air an explosive mixture which is capable of most destructive effects. Hence the necessity for the greatest care in handling these liquids, for thoroughly sound and properly closed vessels to hold them, and the rule that they should never be dealt with in the presence of a naked light.

Mechanical draughtsmen, decorative designers, and others have long wanted a ready means of striking an ellipse, or an oval, as it is commonly, but incorrectly, called, and they generally resort to the rough method possible with two pins and a piece of thread. Such a method cannot be advised where accuracy is required, nor can an ellipsis of small size be attempted in this manner. Mr Thomas Moy's ellipsograph is designed on quite a new principle, and by its use ellipses, down to the very smallest sizes, can be readily drawn, the diameters being adjusted by screws and travelling nuts. Moreover, by a simple alteration of one portion of the instrument, it is adapted for copying or drawing toothed wheels, &c., in sufficiently good perspective to meet the requirements of all but the most fastidious artist. The instrument is small and compact, can be carried in a pocket-case, and is cheap. Its inventor's address is 8 Quality Court, Chancery Square, London.

Lieutenant Ramos, of the United States militia, has recently returned to New York from the scene of the Cuban insurrection, where he had the care of a dynamite gun, manufactured in the last-named city. He gives a ghastly account of the efficiency of this terrible weapon in actual warfare. In the first action in which it was employed, the opposing forces occupied positions on hill-tops, divided by a valley. The Spaniards were busy erecting breastworks when the dynamite gun was trained on them, the second shot from which landed in their midst. In the result thirty men were killed, two cannons were shattered, and the breastworks utterly destroyed. In another engage-

ment this awful weapon fired only five rounds, but it felled the trees, destroyed all vegetation where the shots had struck, and tore its victims limb from limb. Finally, the gun was used at the battle of Guayabita, on which occasion the Spaniards were 12,000 strong, and the Cubans less than half that number. The Cubans were being defeated when the gun arrived. Seven shots sufficed to turn the threatened defeat into a victory, and these seven shots cost the Spaniards a hundred and fifty men.

The modern skater in this country has few opportunities of practising his beloved pastime, for the ways of winter are erratic here, and a promising frost is too often followed by a thaw just when the ice is thick enough to bear. A remedy has been found in real-ice rinks, but these establishments are necessarily costly to maintain, and are not for the multitude. Some years ago in London an imitation ice surface, prepared with certain salts of soda, was tried with indifferent success, but quite recently the idea has been revived in improved form. It is not pretended that this chemically-prepared rink is as good as real ice in first-class condition, but it has a distinct advantage in not requiring constant renovation. In appearance the imitation substance resembles ice which has suffered from a slight thaw, but the surface is in reality quite dry. The exertion of skating over it is somewhat greater than that called for in traversing real ice.

The constantly recurring accidents due to the use of cheap mineral oil lamps, and more especially those having easily fractured glass containers, have stimulated the invention of many an improved form of lamp, some of which have from time to time been described in these columns. Another one has just been patented by Mr Yorke, of Hadleigh, Suffolk, who has sent us particulars of the construction of the lamp which seems to meet all requirements. But the difficulty is to make the ignorant poor aware of the risks they run in using cheap lamps of the ordinary pattern. It is certain that the evil will not cease until the legislature steps in and forbids the sale of any lamp which does not fulfil certain requirements laid down by authority. It would seem, too, that a great many accidents are due to the employment of dangerous oil. We by no means advocate grandmotherly government, but there is a large class of persons who daily run terrible risks to life from their own ignorance, and they should be safeguarded just as children are.

Contrary to general belief, the ruby stands pre-eminent as the material which embodies the highest money value in the smallest possible compass, a stone of five carats being from ten to twelve times the value of a diamond of the same size, although the latter may be of the first water. So, lately, said Professor Judd in the course of a lecture on 'Rubies, Natural and Artificial.' Still, larger rubies exhibit even greater excess in value when compared with diamonds of their own size. The so-called 'Great Ruby' in the British crown is no ruby at all, but merely a spinel. Upper Burma has been long known as the place where the finest rubies are found, and there is also found the beautiful red stone known as the rubellite, which is valued above all other gems by the Chinese, but is disregarded by Western jewelers. The Burmese carry on their mining opera-

tions with the most primitive appliances, and the adoption of modern machinery requires grave consideration, for the gems are scattered through the limestone rock, and if blasting were introduced many of them must infallibly be shattered. In conclusion, Professor Judd dealt with the tests applicable to natural rubies to distinguish them from artificial stones.

Primary batteries without number have been invented, described as giving better results than any contrivances of the kind before known, and have then sunk into oblivion. If all reports be true, a different fate is in store for the battery invented by the Brothers M'Donald, which is now being placed upon the market by the M'Donald patent electro-battery syndicate. The single cell consists of an outer vessel packed with cinders and coke, and filled with a solution of copper sulphate, the inner cell of a porous pot containing a rod of zinc in a solution of common salt. The porous cell is surrounded by a spiral of thick copper wire. A pamphlet descriptive of the cell, and the work which it will do, together with reports of experts upon its behaviour, has been issued by the syndicate.

The ever-recurring nuisance and loss occasioned by the opening of roadways for the purpose of laying and repairing sewer, gas, and water pipes and, more recently, electric mains, gives interest to the proposal lately brought before the London County Council with regard to the establishment of subways under the main thoroughfare for the accommodation of such pipes, &c. In all new streets such subways are produced as a matter of course, and the dwellers therein suffer no inconvenience from upturned roadways; but the proposal before the Council was to establish such tunnels beneath the old thoroughfares. One estimate places the cost at £46,000 per mile, and another at double that sum, but the latter includes reconstruction of sewers and the relaying of pipes and new mains. For the present the proposed scheme will not be proceeded with, the Council considering that it would encounter fierce opposition from the various companies concerned, as it certainly would from the long-suffering London ratepayers.

It is believed that the Rinderpest, which has been the indirect cause of so much trouble in South Africa of late, is a disease which can be best conquered by an inquiry into its possible bacterial origin. With this view, the Cape Government invited Dr Koch, the eminent bacteriologist, to proceed to Cape Town and investigate the question, in the hope that a method of prevention may be discovered. Dr Koch, with the approval of the German Government, has undertaken this important mission, accompanied by a trained assistant. These gentlemen arrived at Cape Town at the end of December.

The modern engineer seems capable of achievements which in the days of 'once upon a time' were only possible by the help of fairies or magicians. An instance of this was lately afforded by an engineering feat which was performed on the Great Eastern Railway during one dark and rainy night. A bridge had to be removed and replaced by a new one, and, incredible as it may seem to be, the work was actually completed in nine hours. At 1:30 A.M. the rails were removed with the upper cross

timbers. An hour later the men were at work lifting out of the way twenty iron girders which each weighed six tons. Next, the new bridge, which had been erected on staging alongside the old one, was slowly hauled into position by the aid of powerful winches, and lowered, a mass weighing 300 tons, on to the permanent supports. The rails were then laid, with only a slight delay to the first train which ran on Sunday morning.

A new system of telegraphing without wires was recently referred to in a lecture by Mr W. H. Preece, of the Post Office. We cannot say that he described the system, for, as the necessary patent formalities were not completed, his tongue was tied. The new method is due to the inventive genius of a young Italian electrician, Marconi by name, who has constructed apparatus for generating and for receiving electric waves, which travel in straight lines through space, which can be reflected and refracted, and which in every way behave after the manner of light. In the lecture-hall two boxes were exhibited, in one of which the waves were generated, while their reception in the other was signalled by the ringing of a bell. Mr Preece believes that this novel method of communication will prove to be of inestimable value in conveying messages between ships, and especially between ships and lighthouses. Experiments recently carried out show that communication is possible with these instruments at a distance of at least 1½ mile, and that neither rain nor snow acts as a check to the transmission of these curious electrical waves.

FRUITS OF PARADISE.

By DR D. MORRIS, C.M.G., Royal Gardens, Kew.

UNDER the title of Paradise Fruits, Dr Macfadyen, many years ago, described some interesting members of the Orange family. Their origin was not clearly traced, but there was little doubt that they had been produced by seed variation in the West Indies. Their nearest relations were the common Shaddocks or Pumelows (*Citrus decumana*). These are well known as the largest of the Citrus fruits; some fine specimens have weighed as much as twenty pounds, and measured two feet in circumference. According to Alphonse de Candolle, 'Shaddocks and Pumelows are probably natives of the islands east of the Malay Archipelago.' They were found in a wild state by Seemann and others in the Fiji Islands and the Friendly Islands, so there is little doubt of their Polynesian origin. They are now distributed in most tropical countries, but, except in a few localities, they are not so highly esteemed, for instance, as the best oranges. Usually the skin is thick and pithy, and the pulp bitter, and there is little or no demand for them in commerce. The Paradise fruits, on the other hand, are in great demand, and they are regarded as the most refreshing and wholesome of any of the Citrus family. Recently, in New York, some of the latter were retailed at almost fabulous prices, and the demand increases every year. The Paradise fruits, while they fall specifically under *Citrus decumana* or the giant *Citrus*, have many points of merit, not the least of which is the keen preference shown for them by the people of the

United States. They are quite distinct from the true Oranges, Citrons, and other groups of the Orange family.

The typical fruits of *Citrus decumana* are those known in India as Pamelows (a contraction of *pomum melo*, the melon apple), called by the French Pompelmousse or Pamplemousse, and by the Spanish and Dutch Pompelmoes. As these fruits were first introduced to the West Indies by Captain Shaddock, in that part of the world they have always borne his name. Pamelows and Shaddocks are only the Old and New World names for one and the same fruit. Sometimes it is stated that the largest fruits are called Shaddocks, and the next in size Pamelows. There is no authority for this distinction. In this place, I shall quote Pamelows and Shaddocks indifferently as convenient popular names for all the largest fruits of the typical *Citrus decumana*. A preference may unconsciously be given to the use of the word Shaddock, but only because it is the most familiar name in the West Indies. As regards the varieties of these fruits existing in different parts of the world, they are for the most part distinguished by the locality where they are grown rather than by any character they may possess. For instance, in India the best Pamelow, according to Bonavia, is the thin-skinned red Pamelow of Bombay. This is a perfectly globose fruit, very juicy and with the pulp of a rosy-red colour. The botanical characters of *Citrus decumana* are perhaps more marked than in any other species. The tree is larger; and both the young shoots and under-side of the leaves are covered more or less with soft down. No other species of *Citrus* has the latter characteristic. The tree may be as high as twenty feet, with a flat crown and many spreading branches. Usually there are no spines. The leaves are distinctly rounded at both ends, with a notch at the apex; the edges are uneven or wavy, owing to the presence of a number of small depressions; the stalk or petiole is furnished with two broad wings, also wavy, and bordered with fine hairs. The flowers are somewhat like those of the orange, but larger, and are both white and fragrant; they usually are in clusters of three to nine. The fruit is spherical or pear-shaped, very large, sometimes even as large as a man's head, and very heavy. The juice is always slightly acid, while the rind in the common sorts is remarkably thick, with a bitter inner membrane. The vesicles containing the juice are very prominent and arranged transversely. In the orange they are hardly discernible.

Pamelows or Shaddocks differ from other *Citrus* fruits in size; they are invariably larger than the largest orange, and, in addition, are compact and very heavy. In colour, they are pale yellow, almost like lemons, but they differ from the lemon in having usually a smoother skin. The flesh is pale-yellow or greenish-white; in some sorts there is a tendency to pink or crimson, as in the so-called 'blood-oranges.' The pink-fleshed Shaddocks, if otherwise acceptable, are more esteemed than the white-fleshed. They are said to be sweeter and more juicy, and have only in a slight and palatable degree the peculiar flavour of the ordinary Shaddocks. Macfadyen, sixty years ago, stated that he always found the pear-shaped Shaddocks better than the spherical sorts. His experience is not invariably

endorsed at the present time. Some of the spherical fruits are of a very delicate flavour, and, as already mentioned, the best of the Indian sorts are not only spherical, but have also a pink flesh.

So far, I have described the fruits of the typical *Citrus decumana* only. When we come to the smaller fruits, we find that both in the tree yielding them, as well as in the fruits themselves, there are certain distinguishing features which show they are rightly separated by Macfadyen, although we cannot go so far as he has done in assigning the plant producing them specific rank. Macfadyen grouped the smaller fruits under *Citrus paradisi*, thus expressing his appreciation of them by designating them the Fruits of Paradise. He distinguished two varieties, to which he gave the names of Forbidden Fruit and the Barbados Grape Fruit. He described the tree as of handsome appearance, about thirty feet in height, with branches sub-erect and sharp at the apex. It will be noticed that in the Shaddock the tree was twenty feet high, with a flat crown and spreading branches. The leaves are oval, rounded, and smooth on both sides. The flowers have linear instead of oblong petals, and the stamens are twenty-five to twenty-six in number instead of thirty to thirty-five. The fruits, as in the Shaddocks, are either spherical or pear-shaped. To the pear-shaped fruits were assigned the name of Grape Fruit, because they usually grew in clusters; while the spherical fruits were called Forbidden Fruit, from a fancied connection with the Garden of Eden. This classification was made by Macfadyen nearly sixty years ago, therefore long before these fruits were so widely distributed as now in various parts of Tropical America. The Forbidden Fruit was known to Tussac in 1824, who called it 'Fruit Défendu ou smaller Shaddock.' Later he refers to the same fruit in the following words: 'C'est une assiette de desert très distinguée et fort saine.' With the exception of the shape, Forbidden Fruits and Grape Fruits are very much alike, but they are both superior to any Shaddock or Pamelow—the fruits of *Citrus decumana*; while the smaller and more delicate fruits bear the distinctive name of Paradise Fruits. Of these the Grape Fruit is the one now so highly esteemed in the United States. The *Penny Cyclopædia* had adopted a similar classification even in 1837. It stated: 'When these fruits arrive at their greatest size, they are called Pomipoleons or Pompemousses; when at the smallest, they form the Forbidden Fruit of the English markets. Another small variety, with the fruit growing in clusters, is what the West Indians call the Grape Fruit.'

The Grape Fruit is not a Shaddock nor a Pamelow. It is quite a distinct fruit, and possesses exceptional merits: at its best, it differs from the Shaddock as much as a fine apple from a common crab.

We may be sure that such keen-witted men as the fruit merchants of New York would not give high prices for Grape Fruit unless it were in great demand, and thoroughly appreciated by people able to pay for a choice and delicate article. It is estimated that there were received in the United States last year Grape Fruit of the value of about £20,000. The demand for it is quite of recent date, but it is increasing so

rapidly that in a few years the Grape Fruit will be one of the most valuable of the Citrus fruits in the New World.

There are, doubtless, many inferior sorts of Grape Fruit. In fact, in the West Indies the plants have been allowed to run almost wild. No care has been taken to select the best varieties, or to bud and graft them, so as to keep them uniformly at a high standard. *Garden and Forest*, the leading horticultural journal in America, very wisely advises that, 'wherever the fruit is grown, it should be borne in mind that the highest success will only come with the use of the best varieties. There is no need to grow the thick-skinned and bitter sorts, and those with a dry cottony pulp, while there are varieties both of the apple-shaped and pear-shaped fruits with a silky skin, full of juice, and of a most delightful flavour, with just enough bitter to give it piquancy and suggest its valuable tonic qualities.'

Mr C. B. Hewitt gives the following account of the Grape Fruit: 'At one time it was not thought much of in Florida, being only eaten by the old Floridians as a spring tonic, and to drive away malaria. As soon as its great medicinal qualities were recognised, the doctors began to recommend it for indigestion, and also as an appetiser. The majority of people who eat this fruit do not like it at first, and many have not tried to like it, on account of the bitterness of the pithy membrane dividing the pulp. The correct way to eat this interesting fruit is to carefully remove this lining and eat only the pulp. Some people prefer to cut the fruit open through the middle, take away the seeds, and then sprinkle a little sugar over the cut surface, and work it in with a spoon. Then let it stand for a little time, or overnight, and eat before meals. There is nothing,' continues this writer, 'in the fruit line yet discovered that possesses the medicinal qualities of the Grape Fruit. The demand for it will increase from year to year, and take up all the fruit that will be grown for the next twenty years. As many as six thousand fruits are said to have been gathered from a single tree. This was an exceptionally fine specimen. It was described as forty-nine feet in height, and thirty feet across its widest branches. It was thirty-four years old.' There are many varieties of Grape Fruit, some seedless, or with an occasional seed only.

The Grape Fruit is in such great demand in America chiefly because it has been so highly recommended by the medical faculty for its valuable dietetic and tonic qualities. It is also very refreshing, and is regarded as a specific for dyspepsia. The Americans are large fruit-eaters, and seldom begin or end a meal without fruit of some kind. To supply them with bananas alone, there arrived from the West Indies during the year 1895 one hundred and eighty-five cargoes of this fruit, comprising nearly seventeen million bunches, of the value of over five million sterling. Jamaica furnished the larger share of this immense shipment of tropical fruit, and that island is becoming quite prosperous in spite of the great depression that has overtaken all the sugar-producing countries in that part of the world. Hitherto Florida has supplied a good deal of the Grape Fruit for the American market, but since the disastrous effects of the 'freeze' of last year the Florida plantations have been almost destroyed.

Much English capital invested in fruit-growing in that State has been lost, and many of our young countrymen settled there have suffered a severe reverse of fortune. Even where the groves are not quite destroyed, it will take years of toil and expenditure to bring them back to their former condition. For some time at least the chief supplies of Grape Fruit must, therefore, be drawn from the West Indies. The people in that part of the world would do well to establish trees of the best varieties, and take advantage of the opportunity to participate in what promises to be a steady and remunerative industry. A leading authority in New York states: 'It will be long before there is an over-production of the best sort of Grape Fruit, since the demand for it increases every year, and it is constantly becoming more popular as a breakfast fruit.' A wealthy population numbering over sixty million supplies a splendid market for disposing of such an attractive commodity as this Grape Fruit. Some idea of the prices recently paid for specially choice fruits may be gathered from the fact that two barrels of Grape Fruit realised the extraordinary price of £5 each in New York, and seven barrels of similar fruit sold in Philadelphia, for £5, 10s. each. Such fruit would retail at more than a dollar apiece. This is probably the highest price ever paid for any fruits of the Orange tribe for eating purposes. It clearly proves that a very active demand exists for Grape Fruit, and although prices must necessarily fall, the probability is that, with a careful selection of the best varieties and a judicious management of the crop, the cultivation will be a profitable one for many years to come.

A LOVE SECRET.

I HAVE no thoughts that jingle into rhyme,
Nor any words that musically chime:
Then, O my sweet, how can I tell to thee
In language fit, with phrase of melody,
The secret rare that trembles on my tongue?
It should be murmured 'neath the pallid moon,
Or poured in gush of strongest, sweetest song:
Fair flowers should give it forth with fragrant
breath;

The very grass your passing feet beneath
Should for my soul's pure joy glad utterance find,
And love-birds coo its sweetness to the wind:

All nature's voices I would call to me.
Whisper it, streamlet; roar it out, O sea—
'I love my love, and dream that she loves me!'

City Temple.

EMMA J. PARKER.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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PHIL'S PARD.

BY W. CARTER PLATTS,

AUTHOR OF 'THE TUTTLEBURY TALES,' 'THE TENDERFOOT INK-SLINGER,' &c.

CHAPTER I.—'PHILOSSIFER PHIL.'

'WHEN I hear philanthropists,' wrote the genial Artemus, 'bewailin' the fack that every year "carries the noble red man nearer the settin' sun," I simply have to say I'm glad of it, tho' it is rough on the settin' sun.'

George Catlin, the friend of, and for eight years sojourner among various tribes of, the 'untutored child of Nature,' admitted 'that on all Indian frontiers . . . there are two classes of Indian society; the one nearest to civilisation, where they have become degraded and impoverished, and their character changed by civilised teaching, and their worst passions inflamed, and jealousies excited by the abuses practised amongst them.' In another place he refers to 'the terrible Apaches, with their long lances, and their lasso always in hand, before whom the Californian gold-diggers are constantly trembling.'

And Philossifer Phil of Plummer's has more than once been heard to remark sententiously, 'I reckon if thar's any good in a Injun, his hide is too pesky tough to let it out onless yew skin him fust !'

These are the thoughts of Western thinkers. Maybe you never heard of Philossifer Phil in that category before, or maybe you never even heard of him at all? That is your misfortune. The camp has a finer name now, for it is altogether a finer place; but if you had known Plummer's in the old hustling days of the late sixties, when things out West were pretty brisk—when the silver epidemic was still raging fiercely, and the gold fever had not yet been entirely stamped out, and when renegade Indian chiefs were supplying exercise and adventure for those cavalry officers whose tastes for pursuit and bloodshed had not been satiated by the late civil war—then

you would have known Philossifer Phil, and, knowing him, would have respected him, for truer heart never beat under red flannel shirt. He was not a man of many words—great thinkers seldom are; but when he had occasion to use it, his tongue was pointed pretty accurately at the mark, and the same might be said of his derring. Not that he was fond of using deadly weapons; for although his body was big enough, his soul was not little enough to allow him to play the contemptible part of bully. Phil had killed his man certainly—not to mention a few Indians—and small blame to him too, when in those lawless days 'a dead man to breakfast,' as the old phrase went, was a common item in the day's menu in that rough-and-tumble Western existence; but in justice be it said that he had never taken human life, white or red, save in self-defence and in defence of the helpless and innocent. The advice he once gave to a new chum forcibly illustrates his own policy: 'Don't yer let hard words gravel yer! Cussin' never so much ez gave a blue jay the rinderpest; but when a galoot draws iron on yer, an' you kin see Kingdom Come up the bar'l of his gun, shoot quick an' shoot straight ef you wanten save thet man from bein' a murderer !'

Nobody knew where Philossifer Phil came from. When the year before a wandering gold prospector named Caleb Plummer had crossed the Grand Cañon out of California and had chanced upon the precious metal near a water-hole in north-west Arizona, he had been one of the first on the spot—had apparently dropped from the clouds—and had remained a prominent citizen of the camp ever since. The luck at Plummer's was streaky—a streak of good and a streak of

bad, and the streaks of bad were considerably the thickest. The lodes were generally thin and poor; there were no 'jeweller's shops' to make a man wealthy at a single stroke of the pick; supplies were difficult to procure. So the camp never rose to the dignity of an important gold centre, and it would probably have been wiped off the face of the earth in a few years had not an enterprising silver mining company come along and lighted up its smelting fires on the spot, and so warmed up the unknown little gold camp into a silver city. Still, though they had never 'struck it rich,' Phil and his partner had through sheer hard work and dogged perseverance done very well at Plummer's. But Phil had no partner now. A fall of dirt in the tunnel had done it, and by the time the philosopher had dragged the companion of his daily toil up the flume he was little more than a mass of bruised, bleeding clay. There was no hope. Once, as the big, strong miner held the sufferer in his arms, the closed eyes opened and a look of intelligence passed between them. Sometimes when you looked into Phil's own eyes they appeared gray and steely, like the blade of a bowie knife, and sometimes they were blue. They were blue now—blue and soft, like the eyes of a mother nursing her dying child, for Phil had learned to love the young, high-spirited lad who had come into that chapter of his life which began at Plummer's, and had shared his hut and his fortunes. Why and how and whence he came, the older man never inquired. It was no business of his.

'Dear old Phil!' whispered the dying man with a great effort, 'my claim's worked out! Will you write—tell'— Then a spasm of pain crossed his face, and his words ended in a heavy groan.

'Mother, pard?' inquired the rough-handed nurse softly, as he wiped the bloody froth from the other's lips.

'Dead!' came faintly.

'Father?'

'Dead!'

'Sisters or brothers?'

'Got none!'

Phil could see his lips framing the words, yet no sounds came from them. The eyes were closed again. Life was ebbing fast away. Another minute, and all would be over. The doomed man was wrestling hip and thigh with death, yet he would not die until his last wish was spoken. It was awful. The veins in his temples swelled like black mountain torrents on a snow-clad mountain-side. His body writhed and quivered in terrible convulsions; the nails of his clenched fingers dug deep into the horny palms of his hands. The ghastly sweat of the death-agony poured down his drawn cheeks.

'I, Harry Haliday, do give and bequeath,' he gasped, and his words came in short, screaming gusts, 'all my share to my cousin, Jim Annarsley—of—Carville—near Springfield—Illinois. Good-bye, Phil—it's—bed-rock at last!' His jaw fell. Phil's pard was dead.

The philosopher of Plummer's laid his burden gently back on the bunk, and took off the dead man's boots, and closed his eyes. Then he reverently laid a clean shirt over the face of his old mate.

'Gone, pard!' he murmured gently to himself, as he drew his shirt sleeve across his eyes, 'whar the Injuns cease from troublin'! Then he lit his pipe, and sat down on an upturned keg. 'To my cousin, Jim Annarsley, of Carville,' he soliloquised, and relapsed into silence. And so, far on into the black solitude, he sat and smoked, and now and then his heart echoed the words, 'Whar the Injuns cease from troublin', and Philosifer Phil was very near to heaven that night.

These things had happened some weeks before, and led to what I want to tell you about.

The mail had come in at Plummer's—a somewhat uncertain event. I wish you could have seen Philosifer Phil that morning as he stood in the doorway of his hut with a business-looking envelope in his hand addressed to 'Philip Marpleson, Esq.' in a bold, clerkly hand. He was a picture worth pausing a minute to look at. On the back of his head, the top of which was removed some six feet odd inches from the soles of his feet, he wore an old slouch-hat that became him well, and well framed the honest, hairy, mahogany-coloured face with its big brown beard. A shiny seam across one cheek-bone was the lasting memento of a flying visit from a Sioux arrow, and the nick in one ear had been left by a Confederate bullet as it sang 'Hail Columbia!' past his head. A red flannel shirt, picturesquely patched with blue serge, open at the throat, and tucked up above the elbows, and a pair of stained moleskin trousers with the bottoms thrust into a pair of big cowhide boots and belted round the waist, completed the outward miner.

The half-breed who had brought over the letters from the nearest station, some forty miles away, had brought also more terrible news than was contained in Uncle Sam's mail-bag; and, as Phil finished reading his letter, noisy tokens of wild excitement reached him from the direction of Tilliper's Bar, where many of the miners had assembled upon the first intimation that the mail was in, and amidst the general racket he heard alarmed voices crying, 'The Apaches are coming!' 'The Injuns are on the warpath!' These were cries to scare a man of more than average courage, for they spelled blood and rapine, torture and death, a sweeping of the country with fire and desolation, the visitation of a fiendish savagery that has already lapped blood, and is athirst with an insatiable, flaming frenzy for more. Yet Phil's features betrayed no emotion—only his eyes grew a little more steely. He was thinking deeply and quickly, and it was only on the most extraordinary occasions that any active partnership existed between his thoughts and the muscles of his face.

Down at Tilliper's Bar the wildest consternation prevailed. Around the dust-covered half-breed who had brought the intelligence were gathered a few incredulous spirits, making him repeat his story over and over again; but the greater portion of the crowd were more than satisfied with the first recital, and were wildly discussing the situation. At length a grizzled old fellow in the corner, called Surly Tim on account of his disposition—natural or acquired—suddenly interposed with:

'Which it seems to me you air a lot of dunder-headed, copper-plated and brass-riveted, lop-ear idjets!' (The miners at Plummer's were accus-

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joined to this style of oratory from Surly Tim, for his growls usually commenced in this, or a similar fashion.) 'Whar's Philossifer Phil? Thar ain't a leveller-headed galoot in all Arizony,—skursely! an' I reckon he's the man to take a holt on this yer Injun boom, an' wrastle with it!' And the crowd immediately took up the cry and demanded of itself, 'Whar's Phil? Whar's Philossifer Phil?' And, as of old when the mountain would not come to Mahomet, Mahomet went to the mountain; so now, when the mountain of wisdom gave no sign of putting in an appearance at Tilliper's Bar, Tilliper's Bar made a move towards the mountain.

As many of the excited citizens of Plummer's as conveniently, or rather as many as inconveniently, could, squeezed themselves into Phil's hut, where they found that sage seated on his bunk smoking, while his fingers apparently toyed with an ugly, murderous-looking six-shooter. The rest gathered round the doorway as near as they possibly could, and tried to get nearer, in order to hear the words of wisdom that should fall from the lips of this Western oracle.

'Is this a circus or a camp-meeting?' inquired Phil blandly of his numerous visitors, without looking up.

'No, it ain't; it's Injuns!' one of the foremost replied, eagerly; and a silence fell on the crowd that lasted until Phil broke it by drawling: 'Wa—all?' which encouraged the spokesman to proceed.

'The reservation Injuns at Little Bear Springs hev broke out an' jined Arrow Nose an' his braves, an' they're jest raisin' Merry Hamlet over the hull kinty—burnin' every shanty they strike, an' makin' the folk in 'em inter sassidge-meat!'

'Wa—all?' as coolly as before.

'Durn it, Phil, you don't quite ketch on!' cried another, provoked into speech by the philosopher's imperturbability in such a crisis. 'These yer Apache demons hev got the drop on a cavalry command of twenty government troopers an' a officer sent out on their trail, an' hev wiped every wother's son of 'em offen the face of the airth, ceptin' two scouts ez outrid 'em an' got clar away! Ain't that c'reck, Renzo?'

'Wa—all?' replied Phil, carelessly laying down the revolver on the bunk beside him, and leisurely taking up a repeating rifle, through the barrel of which he commenced to pull a greasy swab tied to the end of a piece of string by way of varying his amusement. It appeared as if nothing would arouse him to a proper sense of the general danger that threatened.

'An' they've rousted out Comyns an' his boys at Comyns' Ranch, an' shot 'em down on the fly, an' they burned the station at Black Rock an' roasted old Peg an' his wife!—Phil, you don't 'pear to git our drift! Blame my cats if I ever knowed you so slow to tumble afore! Here's these yer pesky redskins maybe prospectin' round the camp jest this very minute, layin' for to cut the liver outen every white atween here an' Prescott, an' you don't 'pear to keer no more'n ef it was a Fourth of July celebration!'

The next instant nobody appeared to be anxious to accuse Phil any longer of inertia, for in a flash he was on his feet, his revolver thrust in the faces of the foremost of the crowd. Sparks seemed to blaze from his eyes as though they had

struck flint. His finger was on the trigger. In his other hand he held the barrel of the repeating-rifle, and in a deep, ringing voice that pierced right through the ear and trickled down the spine and then branched out into cold shivers, he cried: 'Scoot!—quit!'

And they quitted.

Phil's attitude was so sudden—so unexpected—so electrifying, that the miners, taken thoroughly aback, tumbled out of the hut faster than they had come in, and the doorway was the scene of a dozen surging red shirts and heaving slouch-hats fighting to get out into the open. One only remained—Surly Tim, and as Phil slipped his derringer into his pocket and laid the rifle once more on the bunk, the other shuffled up to his side, and, poking his knuckles into the philosopher's ribs, grunted, with a malicious grin at the retreating figures: 'Which it 'pears to me, pard, you rather got the bulge on 'em thet time!'

Phil laughed a low, significant laugh, which reached the fugitives as they burst out of the hut, and arrested them.

'Say, Phil, you played it ruther low down us thet time!' remarked one of the former spokesmen, as the returning tide shoved him again inside the hut.

Then up and spake Surly Tim in his hour of triumph, for he alone saw through Phil's feint and read unaided the lesson it was intended to teach:

'Which it 'pears to me, you blamed, white-livered innercents, that you air a durned sight fitter to be soakin' cat-lap in a nursery than fightin' Injuns in Arizony! I reckon a stranger would hev come to the conclusion that you hadn't been in this yer climate long enough to git your hoofs toughened, foolin' away vallyable time jerkin' chin-music 'bout Apaches while Philossifer Phil was gittin' his guns ready to fight 'em right under yer noses an' you couldn't tumble no more'n a clam! If you ain't ready for one bully boy, how the thunder will you be located when a thousand yelling Injuns hand their keerds in?'

The crowd received Tim's stinging sneer silently, and waited for Phil to speak.

'You've hearn what Surly Tim has to say,' he remarked quietly; 'wall, ram thet down the bar'ls of your shootin'-irons an' keep it thar; an' you kin ram this yer down, too, for a wad: When you hearn thet Gen. Grant is a-comin' to Plummer's in a railroad-keer you kin git ready to meet him when you see him; but when you hearn that Injuns is prospectin' round to jump the camp you be ready for 'em jest twenty-four hours afore they come!'

The miners conferred together very earnestly for a few minutes just outside the hut door. At length they approached Phil once more, and the spokesman announced the result of their deliberations.

'Say, Phil,' he began, 'we've been chawin' this thing over, an' it pans out like this—Plummer's is unanimous thet the defence of Plummer's should be organised agen the chance attack of Apaches; an' we air of opinion thet you air the one man to boss this yer show agen these yer ornery redskin cusses, an' I reckon'—

'You kin reckon, but you ain't in it,' replied

Phil. 'I calkerlate my business for the next three or mebbe four days is all located and staked out. I'm a-goin' to lunch it back to Cruz with 'Renzo to meet my new parl an' tote him along to Plummer's, for he's a tenderfoot an' might mistake Arrow Nose for Kit Carson an' die in his boots.'

SOLDIERS I HAVE MET.

By REV. E. J. HARDY, M.A., Chaplain to H.M. Forces;
Author of *How to be Happy though Married*, &c.

IT is a mistake to think that all soldiers are alike. Putting a red or a blue coat upon a man does not greatly alter him, and much human nature will always be found underneath. All sorts and conditions of men join the army, and this is one reason why I have found it so interesting to study soldiers during the twenty years I have had the honour to serve as Chaplain to Her Majesty's Forces.

There is one way you can always tell that a man has served a good while in the army. He will invariably begin to address you in these words: 'Beg pardon, sir.' In my experience, soldiers are a very well-mannered set of men. When I visit a barrack-room the inmates stand to attention, and there is a little awkwardness upon both sides until the polite man who does the honours of the room puts us at our ease by his good-humoured answer to a question asked, or in some other way.

A common specimen is the pipe-clay soldier. Whenever you see him he is putting pipe-clay upon his straps and belts. It is the element in which he lives. He never thinks of anything outside his regiment or company. If he re-engages in the army, as he generally does, he becomes a machine-man.

An old soldier on Christmas-day was carrying a plum-pudding from the cook-house to his barrack-room. A sergeant who happened to be behind him shouted out 'Attention!' Down went the hands of this creature of habit to his side, and down went the dish. We may laugh at this, but we cannot help admiring the man who is a soldier at heart, and who likes his profession. Nor is it a bad thing for any of us to be willing to be wound-up like a clock and made to go right.

An opposite kind of soldier is he who does not care anything about the army, and has only joined it for his own convenience. He had a row with his father, his employer, or his sweetheart. He committed some offence, which he wished to conceal. He took it into his head that a soldier had only to dress well and walk about with a cane in his hand. This sort of man does not do his own work when he enlists, and takes particular care not to do that of any one else. When he is not in punishment cells, he is in the hospital, pretending to be sick. I once knew a driver of this kind in the Horse Artillery. He always absented himself or went sick on the approach of hard work, as, for instance, after the battery had been route marching, and the horses and harness were particularly dirty. The authorities could do nothing with him, but he was brought to his senses by a barrack-room court-martial

held by those who were tired of doing his work.

In a military hospital a pathetic case came under my notice of a man making a convenience of the army. He was far gone in consumption, and he told me that he enlisted to obtain the height of his ambition, what he considered a very grand thing—a military funeral. How the poor fellow managed to outwit the doctor and get into the army I do not know; probably he exchanged with some one else.

Another man once gave to me as his reason for enlisting that he wanted to learn to read. He had escaped so successfully the School Board inspector, and had been such a truant when a boy, that he grew up quite illiterate. Being ashamed of his ignorance, he thought he would learn something quietly in a military school.

'Believe me, sir,' said an old soldier to me the other day, 'few men enlist in the army except from hunger or drunkenness.' This was an extreme opinion in one direction on a subject that is frequently discussed in the newspapers—the quantity and quality of recruits.

'Now then, gentlemen privates, take up your coal,' I lately heard a soldier say to his companions in a coal-carrying fatigue party. This was a little bit of gentle satire in reference to the men of superior character, education, and social position who are supposed to be now enlisting by those who take a somewhat too rose-coloured view of our recruits. As generally happens, the truth lies between these two extremes.

Talk of the vanity of women; in my experience that of men is quite as great. Certainly a large number of young fellows enlist simply for the sake of 'the clothes.' After a cavalry regiment or a battery of horse artillery passes through their town, they think that they would like to look 'so handsome, brave, and grand,' and enlist.

Not long since a soldier complained to me about the 'cruelty' of his commanding officer, who was trying to prevent the men of his regiment from cultivating a little curl (called a 'quiff') on each side of the forehead. 'I would rather,' he said most solemnly, 'lose an arm than have my front hair cut too short.'

On the other hand, I once heard from a man in a military prison an adventure which showed that he did not object to make himself a scarecrow on an emergency. He had deserted from the station hospital ten months before the time I saw him in durance vile for the offence. Knowing that when he went into hospital all his kit would have been put into store, and that even if he succeeded in getting out of the hospital grounds, he could not have gone far, in the blue flannel clothes worn by sick soldiers, without attracting attention, I asked him how he managed to pass the sentry at the hospital gate and get more presentable clothes. After describing how he had climbed the wall on a dark night, I asked, 'What did you do for clothes?' 'I had noticed,' he replied, 'one day from a window of the hospital that in a potato field not far away there was a scarecrow, with hat, coat, and trousers all complete. I took these in exchange for my hospital clothes, and got away safely, but so miserable was I, that after a few weeks I gave myself up. The scarecrow clothes prevented me from getting work, so I was glad to pick up a few

coppers by singing a hymn (I knew no songs) which was a common one at our church parade.

At a review at Aldershot, two foreign princes, not knowing their way, drove up to a sentry and asked: 'Do you know where the Prince of Wales or the Duke of York is?' 'No, sir,' replied Thomas Atkins, 'I don't know myself, but I'll ask my mate. He knows all the public-houses about here.'

We are happy to say that this sort of man is not nearly as common now as he was when the writer entered the service. The attention that has been bestowed upon the food and surroundings of the soldier, his better education, and the interest now taken in him by earnest people, have affected a great change for the better in his drinking habits.

The first day I visited a military hospital, after arriving at Malta some years ago, a big artilleryman, finding that I was a newcomer, kindly cautioned me by relating his own supposed experience. 'But, above all, sir,' he said, 'don't be taking up with that teetotalism; it is sure to give you the fever. Now, look at me, I'm a man who always took his pot, and for the first two years I was in Malta I drank ten pints of beer every day. Then I thought that as I was leaving the service it was about time for me to put by a little bit of money, and I went on the dead, as we say. The very next day I got the fever, and if I get over it I'll watch giving up my ten pints a day.' Not a word about the ten pints causing the fever!

Mentioning this reply to a young officer, he told me what another bibulous gunner had said to his commanding officer that morning, on being asked if he had any excuse to give for being drunk. 'It's like this, sir,' he said. 'I had been stationed at Fort D'— (a remote little fort where beer could not be obtained), 'and when I came into headquarters and tasted the beer I own I did take a few quarts!' A soldier once told me that he believed every man drank as much as he could afford. 'What about the Duke of Westminster then?' I asked, 'whose income is a thousand pounds a day, and who is said to be a total abstainer.' The man looked incredulous and perplexed, and said: 'Then, sir, he must be mad.'

When I was chaplain at Netley Hospital, a medical officer told me that he heard a man say to himself when recovering from chloroform: 'Well, in all my life I never had such a cheap drink!' Soldiers are beginning to have more sense, and to learn that excess of drink is never cheap.

The mention of Netley recalls to my mind a thing that occurred when I was there. A staff officer was superintending the disembarkation of time-expired men, invalids, and other soldiers from a troopship which had just arrived at Portsmouth from India. The officer went up to a party of men who were drawn up upon the jetty waiting for orders to proceed, and asked them: 'Who are you, and what are you doing here?' 'Please, sir, we are the lunatics!' was the startling answer. These lunatics were on their way to the military asylum at Netley, which is situated a short distance from the hospital. Here, every Sunday morning, I had a service, and I must say that never did I see

a congregation better behaved or more attentive.

But there are other kinds of hospitals in the army besides those for curing bodily diseases. These are provost cells and military prisons. To one of the former in a foreign station a man used to come very often, and when he was going out on one occasion I expressed a hope that he would not come back, and said that it would be much better for himself if he did not. He replied that he could not agree with me, for he did not think it well for a soldier to be altogether without crime. 'What do you mean?' I asked. 'Well, sir, it's this way. If a man is never made a prisoner and brought to the orderly-room, his commanding officer forgets all about him; but if he commits a few crimes and then pulls himself together, the colonel will say: "So-and-so has been giving no trouble lately; we must do something for him." So they look out for a soft billet, and give it to him.' This is an advertising age, and people now adopt curious ways of keeping to the front and preventing themselves from being ignored; but this was the first time I had heard of the advertising advantages of crime.

There was an honesty in the confession of some of the men I have spoken to in military prisons which has quite disarmed me. I remember asking a soldier in Gosport military prison, where he had been sent from Egypt for striking a non-commissioned officer during the Soudan campaign, how it was that he came to commit such a serious military crime. 'We were expecting,' he said, 'to be attacked by the Arabs next day, and as I had been in one engagement and did not like it, I determined to do something that would get me out of another, so I struck the sergeant, knowing that I would be made a prisoner and sent home.' I could not help looking astonished at this cool confession of cowardice, and saying that I hoped and believed that he was a unique specimen of a British soldier. Thereupon the man, who was considerably above the average in intelligence and education, said: 'Excuse me, sir, but there is no use in your talking to me. I know all you could say about England expecting every man to do his duty, that I was a coward for not doing so, and all that kind of thing. I admit that I am a coward, but I can't help it.' 'Then why did you become a soldier?' I asked, and was answered in only one, but that a very expressive, word, 'Starvation.' This man was a specimen, not of what English soldiers, even the worst of them, are, but of what they, taken as a whole, are not.

A celebrated humorist, being told by a friend with whom he was arguing that he had lost his temper, said: 'I only wish I could lose it, for it is a very bad one.'

I met a soldier in prison who was equally desirous of getting rid of his temper, even at the cost of much suffering. In a rage he had threatened to strike a warder, and had insulted the governor. As he was a young soldier, the latter wished to deal with him himself, and not bring him before the visitors who would have ordered him to be flogged for so serious an offence. Discipline, however, had to be

maintained, and as long as the man was obstinate, and refused to conform to it, the governor could not spare him. He sent for me and said: 'I don't want to get No. — a flogging, but it must come to that unless he cave in and tell me that he is sorry for what has taken place. Perhaps you would go to him and ask him (it will come better from you than from me) not to make a fool of himself, and bring the cat down on his back.' I talked to the man for about an hour in his cell, when at last he said: 'The truth is, sir, I have the very devil of a temper. It has brought me into scrapes all through my life, and I don't think there is anything for it but a flogging. It's what my father and mother should have given me, and now I am determined to have my due.' And he did have it, and told me afterwards that he thought it might do him good.

It cannot be said with truth that British soldiers never grumble or 'grounce,' as they call it, for they make use of this privilege, as do the rest of their countrymen; but when they have, by 'grouncing,' 'eased their chests,' they will go anywhere and do anything. These grouncing men are generally what are called in the army lawyers. No subject can be broached upon which the 'lawyer' is not ready to lay down the law; and as for arguing, if you say that a thing is black, he will prove to you that it cannot be anything else than white. I knew two 'lawyers,' belonging to different regiments, who got into an argument as to which of their respective corps went the farther up the Nile. Not only did they try in the end to persuade each other by fists, but they were near getting their regiments into a free fight, it being Christmas time, when soldiers are wont to take their 'enjoyment' pugnaciously. The 'lawyer' has the customs and regulations of the service at his finger-ends, yet he never seems to be able to get his 'rights.' Those who know him say that his only pleasure is to be displeased, and that he does not want to be satisfied.

English soldiers can make themselves at home when abroad much more easily than the soldiers of other nations. In Egypt they may be seen riding donkeys and camels as though they were to the manner born. As a rule they treat the natives of the countries in which they are stationed well, and sometimes even manage to chum with them, while understanding only a word or two of their language. Every native is called 'Joey' by soldiers, and every soldier is called 'Johnny' by natives. Certainly an intelligent sergeant to whom I once remarked that it was a terrible thing to have to shoot down the brave Soudanese, did say to me: 'I believe, sir, those sort of people don't mind being killed. They seem to have no feelings in them.' The sergeant was anything but a hard-hearted man, and the only thing that prevented him from pitying his black enemies was this theory about their not having the same feelings as white men.

It is not so long ago that parents spoke of a young hopeful 'going for a soldier' in much the same tone of despair as would have been used if they had announced his incarceration. This prejudice has become less and less, and is fast disappearing. Those who know soldiers are well aware that their conduct is, generally speaking,

quite as good, or perhaps, owing to discipline, rather better, than that of civilians of the same class; but those who are bad are far more conspicuous on account of their uniform, and such men tend to acquire for all a bad reputation.

MY LORD DUKE.*

By E. W. HORNUNG.

CHAPTER VII.—THE DUKE'S PROGRESS.

CLAUDE's somewhat premature despair was not justified by the event; nevertheless, it did good. Excusable enough at the time, that little human outbreak was also more effective than the longest lecture or the most mellifluous reproof. Jack liked his cousin. The liking was by no means unconnected with gratitude. And now Jack saw that he could best show his gratitude by adopting a more suitable course of conduct than he could claim to have pursued hitherto. He determined to make an effort. He had everything to learn; it was a mountainous task that lay before him; but he faced it with spirit, and made considerable progress in a little space.

He learnt how to treat the servants. The footmen had misbehaved when he addressed them as 'my boy' and 'old toucher' from his place at table. He consulted Claude, and dropped these familiarities as well as the painfully respectful tone which he had at first employed towards old Stebbings, the butler. Stebbings had been very many years in the family. The deference inspired by his venerable presence was natural enough in the new Duke of St Osmund's; but it shocked and distressed Stebbings's feudal soul. He complained to Claude, and he had not to complain twice. For Jack discovered a special and a touching eagerness to master the rudiments of etiquette; though in other matters (which certainly mattered less) he was still incorrigible.

His social 'crammer' could no more cure him of his hatred of a collar than of his liking for his cats. The latter were always with him; the former, unhappily, was not. In these things the Duke was hopelessly unregenerate; he was a stockman still at heart, and a stockman he threatened to remain. The soft summer nights were nothing to the nights in the bush; the fleecy English sky was not blue at all after the skies of Riverina; and the Duke's ideal of a man was 'my old boss.' Claude heard of 'my old boss' until he was sick of the words, which formed a constant reminder of a position most men would have been glad to forget. Yet there was much to be thankful for. There were no more 'scenes' such as the Duke's set-to in his own stable-yard with one of his own tenants. At least nothing of the sort happened again until Jack's next collision with Matthew Hunt. And that was not yet.

Matthew was from home when the Duke, making a round of the estate, with his agent, visited the lower farm in its turn. Old Hunt, Matthew's besotted father, received them in the kitchen with a bloodshot stare and little else, for drink had long dimmed his forces. Not so the old man's daughter-in-law, Matthew's wife, who showed the visitors all over the farm in a noise-

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less manner that made Jack feel uneasy, because he never knew when she was or was not at his elbow. Besides, he could not forget the thrashing he had given her husband, nor yet suppose that she had forgotten it either. The woman was of a gross type strangely accentuated by her feline quietude. She had a continual smile, and sly eyes that dropped when they encountered those of the Duke, whom they followed sedulously at all other moments. Jack seemed to know it, too; at all events he was not sorry to turn his back upon the lower farm.

'A rum lot, the Hunts!' he said at lunch. 'They're about the only folks here that I haven't cottoned to on the spot. I shall get on fine with all the others. But I can't suffer those Hunts!'

'There's no reason why you should suffer them,' observed the agent, in his well-bred drawl; for he had a more aristocratic manner than Claude himself. 'They have the best farm on the property, and they pay the smallest rent. You should think over my suggestion of this morning.'

'No, no,' said the Duke. 'He wants me to double the rent, Claude, and clear them out of that if they won't pay. I can't do it.'

'Well, no; I hardly think you can,' assented Claude. 'Oddly enough, my grandfather had quite a weakness for the Hunts; and then they are very old tenants. That hoary-headed Silenus, whom you saw, was once in the stables here; so was his son after him, in my time; and the old man's sister was my grandmother's maid. You can't turn out people like that *ex itinere*, so to speak—I mean to say in a hurry. It's too old a connection altogether.'

'Exactly what they trade upon,' said the agent. 'They have been spoilt for years, and they expect the Duke to go on spoiling them. I should certainly get rid of the whole gang.'

'No, mister—no!' declared the Duke. 'Claude is right. I can't do it. I might if I hadn't given that fellow a hiding. After that I simply can't; it would look too bad.'

The agent said no more, but his look and shrug were perhaps neither politic nor polite. A strapping sportsman himself, and a person of some polish into the bargain, he was in a position as it were to look down on Claude with one eye and on the Duke with the other. And he did so with a freedom extraordinary in one of his wisdom and understanding.

'One of these days,' said Jack, 'I shall give that joker his cheque. He's not my notion of an overseer at all; if he's too good for the billet let him roll up his swag and clear out; if he isn't, let him treat the bosses as a blooming overseer should.'

'Why, what's the head and chief of his offending now?' asked Claude; for this was one night in the billiard-room, when the agent had been making an example of both cousins at pyramids; it was after he was gone, and while the Duke was still tearing off his collar.

'What has he said to-night?' continued the poet, less poetically. 'I heard nothing offensive.'

'You wouldn't,' said the Duke; 'you're such a good sort yourself. You'd never see when a chap was pulling your leg, but I see fast enough, and I won't have it. What did he say to-night? He talked through his neck when we missed our

shots. That about billiards in the bush I didn't mind; me and the bush, we're fair game; but when he got on to your poetry, old man, I felt inclined to run my cue through his gizzard. "A poet's shot," he says, when you put yourself down; and "you should write a sonnet about that," when you got them three balls in together. I don't say it wasn't a fluke. That has nothing at all to do with it. The way the fellow spoke is what I weaken on. He wouldn't have done for my old boss, and I'm blowed if he'll do for me. One of these days I shall tell him to come outside and take his coat off; and, by the looks of him, I shouldn't be a bit surprised to see him put me through.'

Claude's anxiety overcame every other feeling. He implored the Duke not to make another scene, least of all with such a man as the agent, whose chaff, he truly protested, did not offend himself in the least. Jack shook his head, and was next accused of being more sensitive about the 'wretched poems' than was the poet himself. This could not have been. But Claude was not so very far wrong.

His slender book was being widely reviewed, or rather 'noticed,' for the two things are not quite the same. The 'notices,' on the whole, were good and kind, but 'uninstructed,' so Claude said with a sigh; nevertheless, he appeared to obtain a sneaking satisfaction from their perusal; and as for Jack, he would read them aloud, capering round the room and shaking Claude by both hands in his delighted enthusiasm. To him every printed compliment was a loud note blown from the trumpet of fame into the ears of all the world. He would hear not a word against the paper in which it appeared, but attributed every qualifying remark of Claude's to the latter's modesty, and each favourable paragraph to some great responsible critic voicing the feeling of the country in the matter of these poems. Claude himself, however, though frequently gratified, was not deceived; for the sweetest nothings came invariably from the provincial press; and he at least knew too much to mistake a 'notice' for a 'real review.'

The real reviews were a sadly different matter. There were very few of them, in the first place; their scarcity was worse than their severity. And they were generally very severe indeed; or they did not take the book seriously, which, as Claude said, was the unkindest cut of all.

'Only show me the fellow who wrote that,' exclaimed Jack, one morning, looking over Claude's shoulder as he opened his press-cuttings, 'and I'd give him the biggest hiding the brute ever had in his life!'

Another critic, the writer of a really sympathetic and exhaustive review, the Duke desired to invite to Maske Towers by the next post, 'because,' said Jack, 'he must be a real fine sort, and we ought to know him.'

'I do know him,' said Claude, with a groan, for he had thought of keeping the fact to himself; 'I know him to my cost. He owes me money. This is payment on account. Oh, I am no good! I must give it up! Ignorance and interest alone are at my back. Genuine enthusiasm there is none!'

There was Jack's. But was that genuine? The Duke himself was not sure. He meant it to ring

true ; but then he meant to appreciate the poems ; and of many of them he could make little enough in his secret soul.

All this, however, was but one side of the quiet life led by the cousins at Maske Towers. And it had but one important effect—that of sowing in Claude's heart a loyalty to Jack not unworthy of Jack's loyalty to him.

There were other subjects of discussion upon which the pair were by no means at one. There was Jack's open failure to appreciate the marble halls, the resonant galleries, and the darkling pictures of his princely home. And there was the scatter-brained scheme by which he ultimately sought to counteract the oppressive grandeur of his new surroundings.

It was extremely irritating, especially to a man like Claude ; but the proudest possessions of their ancestors (whose superlative taste and inferior morals had been the byword of so many ages) were those which appealed least to that blameless Goth, the ninth Duke of St Osmund's. The most glaring case in point was that of the pictures, which alone would make the world-wide fame of a less essentially noble seat than Maske Towers. But Titian, Rembrandt, Rubens, Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea del Sarto, Angeletti Vernet and Claude Lorrain, all these were mere names, and new ones, to Happy Jack. Claude Lafont, pointing to magnificent examples of the work of one Old Master after another, made his observations with bated breath, as well he might ; for where is there such another private collection ? Jack, however, was not impressed. He was merely amazed at Claude, and his remarks in the picture-gallery are entirely unworthy of reproduction. But in the State Apartments he was still more trying. He spoke of having the ancient tapestries (after Raphael's Cartoons) taken out and 'well shaken,' which, as Claude said, would have reduced them to immediate atoms. And he threatened to have the painted ceilings whitewashed without delay.

'Aurora banishing night, eh ?' he cried, with horizontal beard and upturned eyes. 'She'd jolly soon banish *my* night, certainly ; it should be, banishing sleep ! And all those beastly little kids ! They ought to be papered over, for decency's sake ; and that brute of a bed, who would sleep in it, I should like to know ? Not me. Not much ! It must be twenty-foot high and ten-foot wide ; it gives me the hump to look at it, and the ceilings give it me worse. See here, Claude, we'll lock up these State Apartments, as you call them, and you shall keep the key. I'm full of 'em ; they'll give me bad dreams as it is.'

They were not, however, the only apartments of which the Duke disapproved. The suite which had been done up entirely for his own use, under Claude's direction, did not long commend itself to the ex-stockman. Everything was far too good for him and his cats ; they were not accustomed to such splendour ; it made them all four uncomfortable. So Jack declared, after taking Claude's breath away with the eccentric plan on which he had set his heart. And for the remainder of their solitary companionship, each man had his own occupation ; the Duke preparing more congenial quarters for himself and the cats ; and Claude, with Jack's permission,

and the agent's skilled advice, superintending the making of private golf-links for Mr Sellwood's peculiar behoof. For the Home Secretary had promised to join the Maske party, for the week-ends at any rate, until (as he expressed it) the Government 'holed out.'

That party was now finally arranged. The Frekes were coming with the Sellwoods, and the latter family were to have the newly-decorated suite which the Duke himself disdained. This was his Grace's own idea. Moreover, he interested himself personally in the right ordering of the rooms during the last few days. But this he kept to himself until the eleventh hour ; in fact, until he was waiting for the drag to come round, which he was himself going to tool over to Devon-holme to meet his guests. It was then that certain unexpected misgivings led Jack to seek out his cousin, in order to take him to see what he had done.

For Claude had shown him what *he* was doing. He was making a set of exceedingly harmless verses, 'To Olivia released from Mayfair,' of which the Duke had already heard the rough draft. The fair copy was in the making even now ; in the comparatively small room, at one end of the library, that Jack had already christened the Poet's Corner.

Claude wiped his pen with characteristic care, and then rose readily enough. He followed Jack down the immensely long, galleried, book-lined library, through a cross-fire of coloured lights from the stained-glass windows, and so to the stairs. Overhead there was another long walk, through corridor after corridor which had always reminded Jack of the hotel in town. But at last, in the newly-decorated wing, the Duke took a key from his pocket and put it in a certain door. And now it was Claude who was reminded of the hotel ; for a most striking atmospheric change met him on the threshold ; only this time it was not a gust of heat but the united perfume of many flowers that came from within.

The room was fairly flooded with fresh roses. It was as though they had either blown through the open window, or fallen in a miraculous shower from the dainty blue ceiling. They pranked the floor in a fine disorder. They studded the table in tiny vases. They hid the mantelpiece, embedded in moss ; from the very grate below they peeped like fairy flames, breathing fragrance instead of warmth ; and some in falling seemed to have caught in the pictures on the walls, so artfully had they been arranged. Only the white narrow bed had escaped the shower. And in the midst of this, his handiwork, stood the Duke, and blushed like the roses themselves.

'Whose room is this ?' asked Claude, though he knew so well.

'Olivia's—I should say Miss Sellwood's. You see, old man, you were writing these awfully clever verses for her ; so I felt I should like to have something ready too.'

'Your poem is the best !' exclaimed Claude, with envious, sparkling eyes. And then he sighed.

'Oh, rot,' said Jack, who was only too thankful for his offering to receive the catchet of Claude's approval. 'All I wanted was to keep *my* end up too. Look here. What do you think of this ?'

And he took from a vase on the dressing-table an enormous white bouquet, that opened Claude's eyes wider than before.

'This is for her too; I wanted to consult you about it,' pursued Jack. 'Should I leave it here for her, or should I take it down to the station and present it to her there? Or at dinner to-night? I want to know just what you think.'

'No, not at dinner,' replied Claude; 'nor yet at the station.'

'Not at all, you mean! I see it in your face!' cried the Duke, so that Claude could not answer him. 'But why not?' he added, vehemently. 'Where does the harm come in? It's only a blooming nosegay; what's wrong with it?'

'Nothing,' was the reply, 'only it might embarrass Olivia.'

'Make her uncomfortable?'

'Well, yes; it would be rather marked, you know. A bouquet like that is only fit for a bride.'

'I don't see it,' said Jack, much crestfallen; 'still, if that's so, it's just as well to know it. There was no harm meant. I wasn't thinking of any rot of that kind. However, we don't want to make her uncomfortable; that wasn't the idea at all; so the bouquet's off—like me. Come and let me tool you as far as the boundary fence. I want to show you how we drive four horses up the bush.'

The exhibition made Claude a little nervous; there was too much shouting at the horses, for his taste, and too much cracking of the whip. Jack could crack a whip better than any man in his own stables. But he accepted Claude's criticism with his usual docility; and dropped him at the gates with his unfailing nod of pure good-humour.

There he sat on the box, in loose rough tweeds of a decent cut, and with the early August sun striking under the brim of a perfectly respectable straw hat, but adding very little to the broad light of his own honest, beaming countenance. He waved his whip, and Claude his hand. Then the whip cracked—but only once—and the poet strolled back to his verses, steeped in thought. He had done his best. His soul divined vaguely what the result might mean to him. But his actual thoughts were characteristically permissible; for he was merely wondering what Lady Caroline and Olivia Sellwood would say now.

BAGDAD.

By H. VALENTINE GEERE.

THE glory of Bagdad is, alas! a thing of bygone days; its wonderful caliphs are no more; and all the magicians, genii, calenders, mysterious barbers, tailors, and such-like folk, of whom we read in the *Arabian Nights*, have taken themselves elsewhere, greatly to the loss of the city. But to a European it is still a most interesting place, for though things modern and occidental are rapidly supplanting things ancient and oriental, the spirit of romance still dwells in the city, and renders it full of glorious possibilities.

The contrast between old and new institutions is in some cases very marked. For instance, a bridge of boats usually connects that part of the

town which is situated on the western bank with the principal part, which is on the eastern bank of the Tigris; but during the time that this bridge was broken away by the floods several steam-launches were run as ferry boats, and it seemed altogether incongruous to see these fussy little boats puffing across the mighty and historical river, crowded with dignified Turks and Arabs. Sometimes a regular wild Bedouin would be amongst the passengers, maintaining an outwardly stoical air, but inwardly, no doubt, regarding the little boats as inventions of the devil; and their noisy sirens (which it apparently afforded the Turkish captains great pleasure to use, for they were kept going nearly all day) made one very inclined to agree with him, and wish them back at their maker's.

In the Bazaar the same struggle for existence may be observed on the part of the old-fashioned ways and products of the East against innovations of recent invention; but the march of 'progress' is unwavering and all-conquering, and it is now only a question of time ere Bagdad will be ruined by too much civilisation.

At present what tends more than anything else to maintain some of the old-world charm about the place is its comparative inaccessibility; but a scheme, emanating from Germany, is now on foot to construct a line of railway from Teheran, which will doubtless do much to 'open it up'—which term of the speculators generally means the ruination of some venerable institutions.

Almost all its imports are brought up the Tigris, and have to be trans-shipped at Busrah, and in many cases at Bombay, but unfortunately this offers no bar to the inrush of European shoddy articles.

The world-famed and picturesque bazaars are simply flooded with the trash which is 'made in Germany,' and the still worse rubbish (in many cases) that goes out of England.

The stalls are filled with Manchester cotton goods of vile quality, and worse design and colouring, which, owing to their low prices, are gradually supplanting the national products, which are in every way their superiors, and in none more so than the artistic.

Of course, in many branches of industry, such as cutlery and saddlery, European goods are undoubtedly ahead of the native articles, from the standpoint of pure utility; but artistically the latter are generally far superior.

The Arabs are frequently imposed upon in a most scandalous manner, for in those parts the principles of commerce appear to be 'every one for himself, and the more honest (or least dishonest) to the wall.' But this applies not only to the native dealer, as the following instance may serve to show. A certain well-known firm in Sheffield has long supplied the Bagdad market with cutlery of sterling quality, which has won for itself quite a name among the Arabs, who invariably look for this firm's trade-mark on anything of the kind, and refuse to take other goods. Now this has come to the ears of certain unprincipled German firms, who are sending out inferior goods, stamped with an imitation of the English firm's trade-mark, which will, of course, injure their trade, not only by competition, but by ruining the reputation which they have built up on the merits of their goods. The worst part

of the business is that, owing to the system of trade, it would be very hard to bring such an offence home, and would certainly be a costly and tedious undertaking.

In the native goods themselves strange anomalies are sometimes seen. Most lovely embroidery work will be put upon cotton of very inferior quality; and in the bazaar the writer noticed a pair of dagger-sheaths tipped with common steel thimbles. Another queer sight is that of a grave old Turk sitting in his stall running up some gorgeous flowing robe, of unmistakable oriental cut and pattern, with a sewing-machine. Imagine some of those magnificent robes, such as Sinbad the Sailor doubtless wore, being made with the aid of a modern fifty-shilling sewing-machine!

It is curious, too, in the shoemakers' stalls to see the pointed yellow or crimson native slippers and boots ranged side by side with French patent-leather shoes, so dear to the heart of the Turkish effendi, and stout goloshes; or in the saddlers' stalls to notice the trim European or Bombay saddles lying next to some gorgeous Arab trappings of blue or crimson velvet, covered with gold embroidery.

The copper-workers' bazaar is most interesting, the clanging of the hammers being quite musical; and the skilled ease with which the workers transform the material into the great cooking pans, or small bowls, as the case may be, remarkable.

The gold and silversmiths' bazaar is another quarter full of fascination for Europeans. It is in a most out-of-the-way part, and entered through a very low and narrow doorway, which, in turn, connects with a short alley, so that its defence would be easy in case of any rioting or disturbance. The bazaar is really a series of stalls or arched chambers situated round the sides of an oblong, and faced by another series which are built in the centre of this oblong, between which rows of little dens (for they are really nothing more) runs a narrow pathway for those having business with the merchants. This footpath is uncovered, and as it gets all the drippings from the roof of the stalls, in addition to the rain which falls direct upon it, and as there is apparently no system of drainage or sanitation in the whole place, its state, as may be readily understood, is not pleasant.

But it is a very picturesque place, with its little fires going in nearly all the shops, and its busy workers who turn out most wonderfully minute work with very clumsy instruments and appliances. The Bagdad goldsmith makes no display of his wares; it would probably be unsafe. He keeps his chains, rings, and bangles, together with whatever precious stones he possesses, in small drawers, or boxes, which can be readily picked up and carried to a place of safety in emergency; or sometimes he will carry about a few of the stones in a purse, and let his customers select therefrom what they will have fitted into the rings or whatever they may be purchasing.

A great many Brummagem gems and Parisian artificial stones find their way to Bagdad, and the wily Oriental frequently gets the better of his customers, despite the delightful air of naïve simplicity he assumes while offering a magnificent (English made) ruby for sale as a 'rare

bargain.' The Bagdad jewellery certainly lacks finish in many of its practical points, such as the hinge of a bracelet or the catch of a watch-chain; but its quaintness of design, and the knowledge that it is all handwork, more than compensates for any little defects of such a nature.

The gold the natives work in is generally much purer and softer than that of our English goldsmiths, and it is difficult to get harder metal used. Long silver chains, with an abundance of seal-chain length and tassels, can be bought very cheap; but it is very difficult to get a good plain gold chain unless it be made to order and a pattern supplied.

Occasionally one comes across beautiful bits of design and workmanship in the way of dagger-sheaths or handles, or mountings to pistol stocks; but as a rule such things are scarce.

Even more interesting than the silversmiths' bazaar are the quarters of dealers in antiques. There is a prohibition against the exportation of antiques of a certain class—such as cuneiform tablets, Babylonian stamped bricks, cylinders, seals, &c.—but the trade in those articles is carried on quite briskly; and a little 'backsheesh' properly bestowed will work wonders in the way of getting them past the customs—as indeed it will in every department of that corrupt state.

The demand for such things, and the high prices which have been given for them by Europeans has led to forgeries, of which great numbers are to be found; and as they are becoming more experienced with practice, the makers of these 'antiques' are learning to turn out really capital imitations which would deceive any but experts.

When taken to task for offering you a forged article, the dealers not uncommonly admit their intentions to defraud you, and express admiration of your cleverness in finding them out—which again shows the curious 'principles' of trading.

A rather amusing incident of this sort is related. A well-known dealer in (and manufacturer of) antiques took a vase to a likely purchaser and offered it for sale at a good price. It was supposed to be a bit of old Babylonian work, and, had it been genuine, would have been most valuable, for it was of splendid design and workmanship; but upon examining it the potential purchaser found on one side a cuneiform inscription, and on the other a cross and the letters I.H.S. interwoven. He at once questioned the dealer on the subject, and accused him of attempting to swindle, which he admitted, saying that he copied the sign from some carving in the French mission buildings. 'But,' he added, with a self-complacent air, 'though it is a forgery, I did it very well.' One of the best known dealers is a cute-looking fellow named Ali Kawdee (at least that is the way his name is pronounced), who has several stores in different parts of the town, where he has enough antiques of all sorts to stock dozens of collectors. There are to be found the cylinders, coins, seals, and tablets already referred to; rugs, daggers, pistols, Persian brasswork and embroidery, old Arab and Turkish rugs, curious packs of cards used in playing some Persian game, and some very curious books illustrated and illuminated by hand. In short, there is something of almost everything; and when once the fascination of examining and purchasing in those quaint, dark little stores is felt, it is likely to leave the pur-

chaser a much poorer man. Even the highly respectable Ali had numerous forged coins and cylinders in his stock, but he had too some really good articles, for which he would ask the most exorbitant prices, which gradually diminished in bargaining; and finally he would hand over the article with the assurance that he was losing on it, and only sold it on account of his 'great friendship for you,' and so forth.

In walking about the markets one has to be very careful not to get knocked down by horsemen or the laden donkeys, which latter never seem to get out of anybody's way. The donkeys of Bagdad are very different animals from the breed one sees in England, and are often larger than those of Egypt, which are so famous; most of them are imported from Bahrein, and are not only larger and finer animals, but also seem much more intelligent than the donkeys of other parts.

The mules, too, are remarkably fine animals, some being larger than horses and far more valuable, which considering their greater hardiness and longer lives is not surprising.

The streets being so narrow and ill-paved, it is only natural that there are remarkably few wheeled conveyances in Bagdad, the only things in the way of carts being those in use by the military, which are lumbering heavy things, apparently a hundred years old. There are also a few carriages belonging to the consuls and some of the Turkish high dignitaries; but they generally look as if they were put out of use from some very bad jobbing stable in the early part of the century, and had never been painted, upholstered, or even dusted since. The place of carts is taken by porters, who will carry enormous loads, and pack animals, which of course add greatly to the picturesque side of the life of the place.

The streets are infested with scavenger dogs, which manage to pick up a living somehow and are certainly worthy of remark. They are of the type common to so many Eastern towns and cities; are generally the size of a collie, with thick coats of all colours, of which the most common are brown, sable, yellow and brown, and white. In many respects they are not unlike a collie in general appearance; but they carry their tails curled over their backs, their coat is more furry, and the head shorter and broader.

Considering the hard times they have of it in their puppyhood, it is a wonder that they ever live to attain full growth, or at least that their disposition is not rendered savage and treacherous. But as a matter of fact the poor beasts are remarkably quiet and inoffensive, and respond most gratefully to any kindness.

The Turks treat them, of course, without much consideration; but without them to act as scavengers in the streets the place would indeed be in a fearful state, and most dreadfully unhealthy, so that they are really valuable public servants.

One of the most salient features of Bagdad is its number of coffee-houses, where crowds of lazy Orientals sit and smoke their narghilés, and sip strong black coffee, or arak, as the case may be. In the evening the passers-by may hear the droning songs of which the Arabs are so fond, or the music (?) of the tom-tom, for then the dissipation of the place reaches its height.

The arrangements in these places of public refreshment are generally of the simplest kind: a number of low tables are placed all over the room (which generally opens directly into the street, upon which side it is quite open in order to afford a good view of the passers-by and any interesting thing that may go on outside); and on either side of them are wooden benches, sometimes provided with a few cushions, but more often not, on which the patrons sit, cross-legged of course. The coffee is as often as not prepared at a low open fire in the same room, which is generally paved only with mud and entirely devoid of covering.

His narghilé and his black coffee are apparently the great pleasures of life to the Turk; and indeed they play no small part in the business of life as well, for on all occasions of calls upon any official, or in any matter of business, black coffee is served in tiny cups; and as it is generally of excellent quality, the custom is far from an unpleasant one.

All the officialdom of Bagdad centres in the Serai, where the Wali or Governor lives, where justice of a sort is dispensed, and where teskari, or passports, without which none may travel, are issued. A visit to this building is interesting enough if you have no important business to transact, which you wish to get settled in a hurry. To see the corridors of that part of the building which is set aside for the administration of justice crowded with excited litigants, awaiting their turn, who while away their time by fighting and quarrelling amongst themselves, is amusing; but after watching the scene for a little time one is apt to go away with a certain feeling of disgust, and to be thankful for not having to form one of the crowd.

In the way of ancient buildings Bagdad has nothing very startling; almost all the houses and bazaars are interesting; but nothing rises above the average, although on the western side of the river stands a tomb, reputedly that of Zobeidah, wife of Haroun-al-Raschid, who did so much for the glory of Bagdad. There are several mosques, each picturesque in its way; but nothing to be compared to those of Constantinople for instance.

The European colony is a small one, but their life is far more agreeable than might be thought possible in that out-of-the-way place. The riding in the summer is simply magnificent, according to all accounts, and the river affords plenty of opportunities for boating; although both exercises have to be taken in the cool of the day—the former in the very early morning, and the latter generally in the evening, when the evening breeze (which is quite regular) renders the temperature bearable.

Soon after I made acquaintance with Bagdad I saw something which first puzzled me, and afterwards amused me very much. A couple of little Arabs were in the roadway, and noticing a European approaching they started a little performance: there was a stone lying in the road, and one of the youngsters moved up to it, with a stick which he was carrying, in a ludicrous burlesque of a golfer. The mimicry was capital; the look ahead to see that all was clear, the careful adjustment of the stone, the ridiculous attitude, and the careful preliminary sweeps with the improvised club were all perfect; and the

humorous twinkle in the boy's eye showed his keen appreciation of his own joke.

Inquiries showed that there is a Bagdad golf-club with some very keen players in it; so that probably the youngster had picked up his knowledge of the game from acting as caddy.

Cricket and tennis are also indulged in, and there is some capital shooting to be had; so that, not to mention minor hobbies, such as photography, there is plenty to pass away the leisure hour, and to prevent any feeling of being exiled.

One of the greatest pests of the place is an eruption known as the 'Bagdad boil,'* from which natives and Europeans alike suffer, and even the poor dogs and other animals have something of the sort.

This horrible boil makes its appearance in the summer, generally attacking men on the legs or arms, and women on the face, as if bent on doing the utmost evil possible; and resists every attempt at curing it, finally only leaving its victims at the approach of winter. Even then it leaves a very deep scar behind it, which is generally a life-long disfigurement, so that it is small wonder that 'the boil' is quite a terror. It is very rare to see a native who is not disfigured by one or more of these terrible scars or sores; but the curious side of the affair is that it is only the dwellers in the towns who appear subject to the evil. Whether it arises from the bad water-supply, the lack of proper (or indeed of any) sanitation, or simply from the over-heating of the blood, and physical exhaustion produced by the climate, is hard to say; but it is certain that any medical man who would take up the subject thoroughly, and discover a remedy for the trouble, would earn for himself not only substantial pecuniary benefit, but the heart-felt gratitude of all whose calling takes them into the parts infested with the trouble.

To experience the charm of the place to the full you want to be living in a house of your own in one of the quaint little narrow streets, rather out of the way of the European colony, which makes it altogether too homelike; and to be able to watch the quiet lazy way in which life moves on there.

The picturesque is on every side: the real seems unreal, and the unreal real. From the flat roof you can see the women in the neighbouring houses, or in the courtyards, engaged in their various duties, such as grinding the corn, winnowing it, making and baking the bread, and so forth.

On some of the roofs you can see one or two sheep feeding on cut grass that is piled before them; on others a graceful gazelle, a pet, will be tied, with which the children of the house are playing, or amusing themselves by teasing, as the case may be; and in most of the yards poultry and a few pigeons strut about. From some of the quaint lattice windows bright eyes shine out, and your vivid imagination pictures the glorious creature to whom they belong; but candour compels me to add that if you obtain a sight of her it is generally only to cruelly dispel any

ideas of her beauty that you may have built up for yourself.

You sit and smoke, and as the spirit of the place settles more and more upon you, you feel that it is a good thing to be idle, and think and dream, and envy the Turk his capacity for such enjoyment.

Then evening falls: you hear the hour of prayer announced from the minarets of all the neighbouring mosques, which stand out such prominent features of the scene. Close overhead the storks sail silently homewards, reminding you in some delightfully vague fashion of half-forgotten fairy-tales of your youth. Their quiet flight seems to harmonise perfectly with the dreamy surroundings of the hour; and a deep spirit of peace broods over everything, bringing such content as all the arts of civilisation exerted to their utmost would fail to produce. And then the moon comes out in the clear sky, touching everything with her soft silver light, and converting the scene into a perfect glory, too lovely to attempt any description of, but which must ever remain indelibly impressed upon the memory of any one possessed of a temperament susceptible to such influences.

As you feast your eyes on the fairy scene you feel that to experience once such a moment, and the spirit of peace attendant upon it, amply repays the trouble of getting to Bagdad—even the semi-modernised Bagdad of to-day, so largely spoiled as it is by western influences; and only regret that the pleasant dreamy feeling must be abandoned for the life of action and bustle which present-day progress requires of all, save (apparently) the phlegmatic, indolent Turk.

MY SHARE IN THE WAR.

By F. NORREYS CONNELL,

Author of *The Fool and his Heart*; *In the Green Park*, &c.

YOU all know how the war of 1870 commenced: how somebody disagreed with somebody else about something or other in Spain, and the Prussians came and battered down our Empire with their shells. But, for sure, you do not know the part I, Jean Antoine Tellier, took in the campaign, which began at Saarbrück and ended in Paris. I was driver No. 1 to gun No. 4 in Captain Millet's battery of field artillery, one of the few crack batteries which had not, on the outbreak of war, been hurried to the frontier. We should have been angry at being left behind had we not known that we were intended as a potential warning to the Communists. When the troops destined to take the field had quitted Paris, we were moved up from our station at Vincennes to quarters within the town itself.

What a perturbed city was Paris in these mad days of July and August! Every one pretending confidence of victory when all knew that it was next to impossible! I remember a copy of General Trochu's book finding its way into our barracks, and being confiscated by the commandant; the owner getting three days' cells for conduct prejudicial to military discipline. I remember our adjutant reading aloud some of

* Similar troubles are found in Aleppo, Busrah, &c., and are there known as the 'Aleppo boil' or the 'Busrah boil,' as the case may be; but Bagdad seems exceptionally unfortunate in respect to the prevalence of the trouble.

the most striking passages describing the disorganisation of our system of defence, and what clouds of fear seemed to settle on us as we listened. It was a just prelude to the news which leaked out from the papers in spite of themselves. Truth to tell, the journals dreaded to say what they knew in its entirety; I saw the *Gaulois* office wrecked for daring to be first with the news of Sedan.

From that day, broken, humbled, demoralised soldiers commenced to drift back on Paris. Now they came in companies, now in brigades, now in twos and threes. One day there came to the Porte de la Villette a party of drunken Zouaves singing the Marseillaise and cursing the Emperor: they had run all the way from the Ardennes and boasted of their endurance. They shared our quarters; and told us that, having been compelled by their officers to lay down their arms at Sedan, they had subsequently burst the cordon of German sentries and escaped. In reality, as we afterwards found out, they had thrown away their rifles at the first cannon shot at Bazeilles, and scampered from the battle-field like driven geese; unfortunately we learned this too late to treat them as they deserved, and accepted them unquestioningly as luckless brothers in arms, overpowered but not dishonoured. Soon we were to know them for what they were. Ere long, even before the winter, itself before its time, the blustering Germans came tramping down upon our capital.

Judging by their line of direction, General Trochu thought they must attempt the passage of the Seine at or about Ablon; and hoping to catch them in the act, he ordered out General Ducrot with thirty thousand of us—horse, foot, and artillery—to try the chances of war.

I had never been under fire before in my life, and I have never seen a pitched battle since. Save Captain Millet himself, the only one of our battery who had any field service to his name was our brigadier, a veteran of '59. (In France a brigadier is a non-commissioned officer about equivalent in rank to an English corporal.) Our parade form was famous, but I must own we all seemed a little shaky going into action; there was an unnecessary cracking of whips, an unusual slackness of gait, even a nervousness in the way the gun leaders followed their superior's commands; Captain Millet and the brigadier were quite at their ease, but the two lieutenants were vastly unstrung, and, what is worse, let their men feel it.

We were despatched with the advance guard, being the only artillery available to take the fore-front of the battle at a moment's notice; plenty of other guns there were, but all short either of horses or of trained gunners; we ourselves wanted a second captain, and one of our caissons was drawn by cattle fresh from grass and most unhandy. We moved out through the Porte de Montrouge at a curate's trot, which we had to drop to a walk while yet within a quarter mile of the fortifications, the battalions in front having clubbed and fallen into disorder owing to

the miscalculations of the staff officers responsible for the dispositions *en route*. It was obvious to the most blind that everything was at sixes and sevens, and the realisation of the crass stupidity of the authorities did not tend to increase our confidence.

Instead of being at Villeneuve-le-Roi by mid-day, as we had not over sanguinely hoped, we found ourselves entering Bagneux; and it was while waiting here for a regiment of hussars to clear the road, and give us room for our twelve-pounders to pass, that we first heard the distant thunder of the enemy's cannon. The knowledge that we were approaching the fighting line without support, for not a soldier of any kind was to be seen save the cavalymen who were obstructing our path, suggested to our commander the advisability of calling a halt, and one man from each gun was told off to seek refreshment for the others at the many *estaminets* which elbowed each other in the village street. That is the one good thing I must say of that day at Bagneux; we all had as much liquor as we could drink, and devil a sou to pay. Indeed, why should we not? Were we not Frenchmen and soldiers! The Prussians burned the place, *estaminets* and all, the day we left it!

Presently up came our supports, as luck would have it, those rogues of Zouaves who had escaped from Sedan; but we had still to learn of what base metal they were made. They came in ill dressed ranks up the village street, and without asking with your leave or by your leave, broke order and flung themselves on the barrels we had rolled into the street.

The officers tried to restore discipline by all means in their power, even going so far as to beat the wretches with the flats of their swords. But all their efforts were in vain, and the tumult might have gone on till night had not a Prussian shell whirled over the house-tops, and striking a drunken corporal, mixed him up so inextricably with a brandy-cask that it would have taken a wine-taster to say which was which.

This dread visitor had much the same effect upon the mob as the sudden advent of the father has upon a disorderly nursery; sobering mechanically, the Zouaves fell into rank; and their officers marched them off in the direction of the enemy before, I think, they quite grasped where they were going.

We followed them at a very short interval, and leaving the village street behind, once more found ourselves with green fields on either side. In front of us the ground rose to a sort of hog's back; and on the crest were French troops in action, stretching out to left and right in a long, irregular, not very imposing line which I took to mark the limit of our defence in force. There was a considerable if somewhat spasmodic rattle of musketry in all directions, but the cannon only spoke occasionally; evidently the shell which had fallen into the village was but a random, and possibly unintended, visitor. There were several gaps in the battle array I saw before me; which were rapidly being filled by troops debouching on the field of battle from three roads at once. One or two ambulance wagons were visible here and there, but the casualties so far were inconsiderable. Now and then a man dropped dead under a stray shot, or came halting

out of action all pale and bloody. As luck would have it, the first really appalling catastrophe was to fall upon our battery. I had whipped up my off leader at the order 'Action front,' and we were galloping briskly into the position allotted us by a flustered staff-officer, when a terrific explosion behind nearly shook me out of my saddle, and my maddened horses bolted. One of the caissons attached to our battery had burst, blowing men, machine, and cattle to atoms. Fortunately, it was the last wagon of the file, or the consequences might have been more dreadful still.

I had great difficulty in regaining command of my horses, and keeping my alignment with the three guns in front. The terrified brutes nearly kicked the traces to bits; at length, with whip and spur, I mastered them. Luckily the pair behind were of a somewhat heavier type than usually find their way into field batteries, and they kept the equilibrium of the team.

At last I got them together and dashed into position, dropped my gun, and wheeled into station behind it, my horses still restive, prancing at every bullet. Captain Millet had dismounted, and was standing by gun No. 1 on my left, making his calculations, paper and pencil in hand. Our objective, as I guessed, was a small farm-house far away beneath us in the valley from which the smoke of small arms sputtered unceasingly. Between us and it were dotted considerable numbers of voltigeurs forming our skirmishing line. At first they all seemed to be advancing on the farm-house, but suddenly it struck me that only about half of them were actually in motion, and then I drew a long breath as I realised that the others were probably dead. The difficulty we were in was to avoid the danger of killing our own men with our shells.

Captain Millet finished his calculations. He gave his orders, a common shell was rammed home, the screw twisted to the elevation, then . . .

'Fire!'

With a sharp detonation the projectile bursts from the body of the gun, and soaring quicker than sound above the heads of our skirmishers, seems to drop perpendicularly upon the enemy's post . . . but no, it has fallen to the farther side; the elevation was too great.

I carry my eyes back to our own position, and I see one of our gunners on the ground; a bullet had struck him dead while watching the flight of the projectile he himself had aimed.

Gun No. 2 stands loaded, the captain turns his attention to it: no calculations this time: the trail is slung round to get the direction, a slightly less elevation is ordered—bang!

This time we have them, a chimney-stack and roof collapse under our metal, and we hear the distant crack of the tumbling beams.

Now all our guns open on this mark, and my horses quiver and neigh in distress at the bellowing mouths of fire.

Our brigadier chuckles as we see the dark forms of the foreign soldiers quitting the no longer tenable building, and seeking shelter in the wood behind. But our mirth is short-lived; for, with the rumble of doom itself, a huge Prussian battery, masked by the trees and farm,

launches shot and shell headlong upon us. Almost before we know whence comes the storm, a howitzer is dismounted, a team butchered, one of our lieutenants and ten men stretched lifeless and horrible upon the ground. We try to work our pieces faster, but in vain: another gun is silenced, three more servants down: we must fall back. With difficulty I bring my limber up to my gun; it is hooked on, and I am about to stretch my horses to the gallop, when crack goes the wheel, struck by a spent shot, and the piece lurches forward on the rutted ground. Captain Millet springs from the horse on which he has just vaulted, and helps the gunners to take our spare wheel from the caisson in our rear, trundle it up and mount it on the broken piece. What a labour! with rifle bullet and shell whizzing past our ears, or ploughing the sod beneath us, our cattle frantic almost beyond management! The other guns are pushed on ahead, and we are left alone while our wheel is hammered to the axle and the linchpin driven home.

At last 'Forward' comes the word, even as our captain falls—O irony of Fate that respects not even the brave—struck from behind. But the enemy are upon us, and we dare not stop to pick him up. At the grand gallop we plunge from the field on to the high-road, and tear down it far in the rear of the three other guns of our battery which have escaped from the field.

Down at Bagneux we come on our friends the Zouaves, in scandalous deroute, drunk with absinthe and fear.

'Drive over them!' shouts my brigadier with a curse. I hear a shriek, then feel the crunch of limbs beneath my horses' hoofs. One of the Zouaves fires after us, and the driver behind me falls from his saddle under the scurrying wheels. On we go at the gallop. Suddenly a shout of terror in front makes me look up; a posse of the enemy's hussars have ridden through our lines, and are sabring the fugitives in the road before us. The brigadier sees them, and clutches the bridle of the riderless horse behind me.

'Gallop for everything!' he shouts. Our whips sweep through the air, and yet an increase of pace is slogged out of our team. The hussars see us coming, and gallop to meet us, waving their swords.

'Halt! Halt! Halt!'

I bend my head, raising my whip as a guard, I shut my eyes.

I hear the hoofs click, the chains crash, the wheels thump, as we dash down upon them. The clash of steel, the thud of an opposing body, the snap of a revolver, a shout of agony: gun and limber leap in the air, but we do not stop. Faster and faster we fly, for now we have reached the descending gradient where the road sweeps down to the Porte de Montrouge.

I breathe again, I open my eyes, I look around: I am alone, galloping six wild horses and a blood-splashed gun at headlong speed to Paris.

Terror leaves me and I sing some noisy boulevard song, keeping time with my cracking whip.

Then suddenly the gray fortifications stretch out before me, and I hear a fat national guard roaring :

'*Lache! Lache! Lache!*'

But I have saved my gun.

EXPERIMENTS AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

PROMPTED by the desire to find out what influence different climates, especially residence among high mountains, exerted on the health of the tourist and of sufferers from diseases of the lungs, Dr W. Marcet, F.R.S., about twenty years ago, commenced an exhaustive series of experiments into the chemical work of the lungs under different conditions. Many of these experiments, which are still being carried out, were made on the mountains, and possess considerable interest for the ordinary reader on account of their picturesqueness as well as for their scientific results. The starting points was Yvoire—a little town on the beautiful Savoy shore of the Lake of Geneva, where the deep blue water lies placidly at the foot of the old square château.

Dr Marcet, who comes of an old Anglo-Swiss family, and is an experienced mountaineer, carried out numerous experiments at the well-known Hospice of the Great St Bernard; the Riffel Hotel, Zermatt; the hut in the St Theodule pass, at a height of nearly 11,000 feet; and the summit of the Breithorn, nearly 14,000 feet. Yvoire itself is 1230 feet above sea-level, but the difference of height between the Lake of Geneva and the mountains (about 9000 feet) was quite sufficient for the purpose Dr Marcet had in view. At each station experiments were made sitting, or walking on level ground, or walking uphill; the breath in each case being collected in a large india-rubber bag, and examined chemically as soon afterwards as possible.

The Breithorn, although nearly as high as its neighbour, the Matterhorn, is easy to climb, and Dr Marcet ascended it with his instruments on three different occasions, staying on the summit for five or six hours. Eight successive days were spent amongst the snow on the St Theodule pass, and, during another year, three days were spent there, one of them being devoted to an ascent of the Breithorn.

One of the processes gone through in analysing the air from the lungs consists in shaking up a vessel full of the air with a solution of baryta, analagous to lime-water. On shaking, the carbonic acid in the breathed air turns the clear solution quite white, and Dr Marcet relates with great glee an incident in connection with this that occurred outside the Hospice of the Great St Bernard. Experiments were being made in the open air, not far from the monastery, by Dr Marcet and his guide, when they were surrounded by a large party of tourists, who regarded the whole proceeding with open-mouthed astonish-

ment. Their wonder was still further increased when the clear liquid was turned white by being shaken up with air. On questions being put to the guide, he informed them, with a solemn face and an air of great secrecy, that a factory for the manufacture of condensed milk was about to be erected there, and that what they had seen was part of a preliminary experiment.

The results of all this work showed that breathing on the mountains at moderate heights was easier than at sea-level, and that, owing to the lower pressure, the lungs got more work out of the air they took in. This is no doubt one of the reasons why mountainous climates are good for people with lung-troubles. Another fact brought out was that a much larger quantity of carbonic acid was produced at high altitudes than on the plains; in other words, the human fires required a great deal more fuel on the tops of the mountains than they did at the bottom when the body was at rest. In everything else, however, there was no practical difference between the mountains and the plains.

In addition to these experiments, Dr Marcet ascended the Col du Géant with his instruments, but the investigator and his assistant suffered so severely from the cold that few satisfactory results were obtained. During the ascent and descent of the Col, Dr Marcet was astonished at the strength and skill of his porters from Courmayeur on the Italian side of the Mount Blanc range. The baggage, consisting of a large box weighing eighty-eight pounds, a basket weighing seventy-seven pounds, and another load not quite so heavy, was entrusted to three porters, who had to carry it over rocks where it was difficult for a person free from encumbrance to obtain a secure footing. Before reaching the summit of the Col, which was situated more than 6000 feet above the inn whence they started, a steep snow *arête* had to be climbed. The slope was so sharp that a slip was expected at every step, but the men took it quite as a matter of course. On the return journey it was thought advisable to secure a fourth porter. Even then the investigator's attention was divided between fears for the safety of the eighty-eight pounds package and its bearer and admiration for the man's skill and fearlessness. 'To see a man with such a load on his back balancing himself on his right foot, then bending his knee slowly and gradually, and searching for a slight projecting rock several feet below where to land safely the tip of his left foot, could not but make me feel very anxious,' says Dr Marcet in one of his works (*Southern and Swiss Health Resorts*, Churchill). 'Another man was at hand ready to seize hold of the box in case of a slip, and avert one of the principal dangers, that of the bearer having his legs crushed under the weight he was carrying.'

The next problem that arose was whether the large amount of fuel burnt in the body when at rest on the mountains was due to cold or was due in some way to the height. In order to settle this point, Dr Marcet undertook an expedition to Teneriffe. The advantage presented by the island of Teneriffe was that its Peak rises almost sheer out of the sea to a height of nearly

12,000 feet, and is as warm at the top as it is at the bottom. The same guide from Chamonix who assisted Dr Marcet in Switzerland accompanied him to Teneriffe.

The first camp was made at the foot of Mount Guajara in the old crater surrounding the Peak itself, which rises to a farther height of 5500 feet, making 12,200 feet in all. The tent, that had been brought up on mule-back with the rest of the baggage and instruments, was pitched on a patch of white baked clay, a fire was made out of dead retama bushes, and the small party soon became as comfortable as circumstances would permit. The retama—a kind of broom—is almost the only thing that will grow on the upper portion of the Peak, and the landscape surrounding the camp was dreary and arid in the extreme. The bushes, however, sufficed to maintain animal life in the shape of bees and rabbits. On one occasion, Dr Marcet saw one hundred and forty rude hives arranged in rows, and near them a little group of men and children. The men employed their time in hunting rabbits with dogs. The heat was enormous during the day-time, and experiments would have been quite out of the question without the wooden sun-shelter that had been erected near the tent. Professor Piazzi Smyth, who made some astronomical observations on Mount Guajara in 1856, found the temperature in the sun to be $212^{\circ}4'$ Fahrenheit, a little over the boiling-point of water. The nights were equally cold, water placed in the open being converted into solid ice by the morning. The dryness of the air was very remarkable. Deal boxes exposed to the sun split in all directions. The skins of the observers became dry and scaly so that it was unpleasant to touch anything, and the smallest cut was very painful. 'Washing-up' after meals was the most objectionable duty of the day, but as water had to be fetched from a little spring some distance off and the supply was limited, cleanly scruples were easily satisfied. Another curious effect of the dryness of the atmosphere was that meat kept good for any length of time. Even the efforts of the flies had no effect upon it. The same thing has been noticed by several observers in Upper Egypt and on the American prairies.

After experimenting at Mount Guajara for twelve days, the camp was moved to Alta Vista, 10,700 feet above sea-level, and within easy distance of the summit of the terminal cone. The tent was pitched under the shelter of a large rock between two lava streams, being surrounded on nearly every side by piled-up masses of black lava. Water was obtained in a curious way. Not far from the camp was a chasm thirteen feet by seven and a half feet, giving entrance to a cave in the lava about fourteen feet deep. At the bottom of the cave was a pool of water overlying a mass of ice, and on the higher portion of the cave snow was piled up. It appeared that during the winter snow was driven into the cave by the wind, and this melts gradually during the summer months. Dr Marcet thinks it likely that the cave was formed by an escape of gas in the lava.

From Alta Vista a good view of the cloud bank below was always to be had. This cloud stratum is about 2000 feet thick, beginning at about 3000 feet above the sea, and ending at

about 5500 feet. Occasionally glimpses of the sea and the fertile portions of the island were obtained, and Dr Marcet was surprised once or twice to notice that the sea was quite rough, although there was not a breath of wind on the Peak at the time. The magnificence of the cloud panorama was beyond description. Wave upon wave lay in the motionless sea of clouds about 4000 feet below the camp. Gigantic waterfalls, or rather cloudfalls, met, simulating motionless torrents pouring over rocks. Where the island of Grand Canary rose up, there was a break and a patch of blue sea; whilst in one spot was a gigantic shadow in the cloud-sea—the shadow of the Peak itself with its terminal cone. No words could picture the appearance of the clouds at sunset.

On two occasions the summit of the terminal cone was reached, the instruments being carried in knapsacks over the masses of lava. The crater was of dazzling whiteness, about thirty-five feet deep, and nearly a mile in circumference. Sulphurous fumes were emitted in several places, and at one spot a real 'solfatara,' giving out steam and great heat, was discovered. The view of the black sea of lava contrasted against the rolling masses of the white clouds, through which could be seen patches of the lower portion of the island and the blue sea, must have been very weird and beautiful.

On the day after the second ascent the party returned to the coast, and Dr Marcet was soon in a position to sum up the results of his scientific labours. As had been expected, it was found that height apart from cold exercised no influence on the amount of fuel consumed in the body. Several other interesting points have been brought out. Amongst other things it was found that the amount of moisture exhaled from the lungs in the Peak had been very great.

Since the Teneriffe expedition Dr Marcet's work on respiration has been mostly confined to the unromantic surroundings of a laboratory in London; and those who are interested in the scientific side of the question will find his results summed up in the accounts of the Croonian Lectures, published in the *Lancet* and *British Medical Journal* for 1895. A brief account of them appears also in a recent number of *Knowledge*.

'IN A PINE-WOOD.'

THE waves are breaking on some far-off strand,
And as the fresh wind sweeps across the land
It bears sea-melodies to this still grove,
This squirrel-haunted spot, where the wild dove
Mourns undisturbed amid the solemn pines:
While high above, the branches bend and sway,
Battling the breeze. Beneath in serried lines
The stately stems stand in unmoved array;
And soft green fronds at intervals show clear
Their vivid tints against the sombre bed
Of scented pine-points strewn there year by year.
Then, sudden as it came, high overhead
Past whirls the wind, and down the purpling glades
Night's silence settles as the daylight fades.

OLIVE MOLESWORTH.

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THE FOUNDING OF ST PETERSBURG.

By FRED WHISHAW,
Author of Out of Doors in Tsarland, &c.

It must surely have struck most people who have journeyed over that interminable line of railway which extends in Russia from the frontier to the capital, that it is a thousand pities Peter the Great did not wait until he had so thoroughly thrashed the Swedes that he could establish his new metropolis within more reasonable distance of civilised Europe, say somewhere upon the shores of the Baltic, at Mitau or Riga. A glance at the map of Russia will show what a boon the great Peter would have conferred upon tourists in general by selecting one of the above-mentioned sites for his capital in place of the remote and inconvenient St Petersburg. The fact of the matter is, however, that Peter the Great was so exceedingly anxious to acquire a seaport of one kind or another in addition to his only available place of access to the sea, Archangel, that he was disposed to be too easily satisfied with his early triumphs over the armies of the then redoubtable Swede, and to settle himself finally where he first placed his foot upon the seashore. It is certain that when Peter gained a few early victories over Sweden he never supposed that he was destined to entirely overthrow his powerful neighbours, and to become the absolute master of the entire littoral of the Gulf of Finland and of the Baltic Provinces. Many a time during the long wars in which the two nations were engaged did he endeavour by every means to make peace upon terms infinitely less favourable than those eventually wrested from Sweden. Had he foreseen his ultimate triumphs, he might have selected at leisure a more convenient site for the city of St Petersburg, and I propose in this place to give a short sketch of the circumstances which led to the selection of this particular site.

Early in the autumn of 1702 the Great Tsar was in the very midst of his long war with the Swedes, and had, during the past year, achieved sundry notable successes against the armies of

Charles of Sweden, though the final tussle, which practically culminated at Pultowa, was still seven years distant in the future. General Sheremetieff's victories over Lippenbach in Livonia had been complete and decisive, and Peter imagined that he now saw his opportunity to deal a blow which he had long contemplated, and which would, if successful, give him that for which he was ready to risk the very existence of his empire; to attain which, indeed, he had already risked everything by embarking in this war with his powerful neighbours, the Swedes, generalised by their seemingly invincible young warrior, King Charles XII. Peter himself was, in August 1702, at Archangel, very busy building ships of war, when the news of Sheremetieff's latest success on 29th July, at Hummelshof, reached him. Down from the north came Peter with a small army, crossed Lake Onega, and floated down the River Svir to Lake Ladoga, where he found Sheremetieff with some thirteen thousand men awaiting him. Here the two joined forces, and attacked a Swedish fort situated upon a small island lying just in the neck of Lake Ladoga, where the River Neva flows out of the latter.

This island was called by the Swedes Nöteborg, and by the Russians 'Oryéchovo' ('made of nut; the shape of the island being supposed to resemble a nut). A strong Swedish garrison held the fort, which was full of ladies and women generally, officers and soldiers alike being accompanied in their somewhat lonely outpost duty by their wives. These ladies sent a message to Peter, begging that they might be allowed to depart before hostilities began; they wished to go, they said, to the nearest Swedish town or stronghold in order to be out of danger. To this communication Peter returned a courteous reply; he could not think, he said, of allowing a company of unprotected ladies to travel without escort in these troublous times; they might go, certainly, if they wished, but he must insist upon their taking their husbands with them. The ladies, however, preferred to remain, and for three days their delicate ears were shocked and assailed by

the noise of much firing and fighting. After the third day, they adopted the advice of Peter the Tsar, and evacuated the dangerous place, taking their husbands with them. Thus Nöteborg and the upper waters of the Neva fell into the hands of the Russians, who promptly occupied and strengthened the place, and rechristened it *Schlisselburg*, which is the name it bears to this day, and which name was given to it in recognition of the fact that this fort was the key to the Neva, which, again, was to be—if Peter could make it so—the window by which the Russia of the future should look out upon the sea.

Peter was much engaged at Voronej during the late autumn of 1702, keeping a watchful eye upon Turk and Tartar in the south, the while he prosecuted his operations in the extensive ship-building works he had set up there some years before, in preparation for his attack upon Azov in 1696. But in May 1703 he was free once more to take a further step towards the attainment of his great object: the establishment of a seaport on the shores of the Gulf of Finland.

Between him and the realisation of his ardent desires there now remained only the one small Swedish fortress of Nyenskantz on the Neva, some thirty miles lower than his newly acquired stronghold of Schlisselburg. Nyenskantz lay exactly at the confluence of a small river, the Oclta, with the Neva at a point only a mile or two from the mouth of the latter, where it flows into and is lost, after its short career of some thirty miles, in the waters of the Finnish gulf. Nyenskantz was bombarded, and capitulated the next day, and then Peter found himself in actual possession of a seaport, and knew that, if only he could retain it, Russia should now look out into Europe through a first-floor window of her own; for Archangel was, after all, in the attics; Azov was of little use, and very precarious to hold (it was actually given back to the Turks not long afterwards), and the Caspian was no better than a lake. Russia could now fairly cherish the ambition to become, one day, a naval power, and to take her place with other European nations upon the seas that washed the fringes of the Continent. Peter was in ecstasy, and there were great doings and rejoicings in Moscow, which city did not recognise, as yet, that the capture of Nyenskantz had sounded her own death-knell as capital of the Russian empire. For Nyenskantz was rechristened Slotburg, and became before very long the nucleus of the St Petersburg of to-day. The Neva was captured not an hour too soon; for very shortly after the taking of Slotburg, the Russian garrison were surprised to hear cannon firing from the neck of the Gulf of Finland. The shots proved to be signals from a Swedish fleet arriving at the mouth of the Neva in blissful ignorance of the fact that the Swedish Nyenskantz was now the Russian Slotburg, and that the redoubtable Peter himself was in command thereof in place of the late Swedish general. Peter replied to the signals, however, as cordially as though he had indeed been the individual he was supposed to be, and was longing for the sight of Swedish faces after a year's lonely exile in this out-of-the-way corner of the world.

Up the Neva came sailing a deputation of two ships of the line, leaving the rest of the fleet in

the gulf, and anchored off Vassili-Ostrof—an island upon which now stands a large portion of the city of St Petersburg, but which was then, of course, a swampy, wooded desert inhabited by ducks and snipe, and perhaps, in the drier portions, by wolves and wood-game. And now Russia was to gain her first naval battle, if we may call it so.

Peter, with Menshikoff and others (the former now fast rising into his position of prime favourite of the Tsar, Lefort and Gordon both being dead), made, under cover of night, a careful survey of the two Swedish vessels lying in fancied security on Neva's placid bosom, and having formed their plans, returned to Slotburg, where a boat's crew sent up from the men-of-war had already been detained to the immense surprise of the Swedish sailors, who had expected a very different reception. Next morning Peter sent forward two regiments of the guards, packed into thirty large open boats which he commanded in person; this force reached the two Swedish vessels under cover of the islands, and succeeded in boarding them, and, after a sharp fight, in capturing both and returning up the river with them as far as Slotburg—the other five vessels taking fright by reason of the mysterious calamity which had befallen their companions, and escaping to sea.

Thus the Neva was now fairly in the hands of Peter the Tsar, and he was free to commence the building of his new metropolis. So far as the fortress was concerned, there was no difficulty whatever, and the work of rebuilding the fortifications at Slotburg was soon in full swing; but to cause a city to spring up around it was a very different affair. It was an inconvenient portion of the realm to settle down in, and nobody had the smallest wish to build houses in so remote and outlandish a spot. Nevertheless, by dint of moral pressure, some of Peter's loyal boyars were persuaded to pitch their tents by Neva's banks, and to put up with the inconveniences of living out of the reach of civilisation for awhile. Workmen were attracted to the place in thousands, and pile-driving and the building of wooden edifices were soon being busily prosecuted. There were material disadvantages other than those mentioned, with which these early inhabitants of St Petersburg were obliged to contend. For instance, there was the danger of being unexpectedly shelled by a Swedish fleet sailing up the Neva and opening fire without warning—for the war with Sweden went on for many a long year. Again, wolves prowled about the streets at night, and there were no policemen to direct them to move on or to prevent them committing a breach of the peace. Ten years after the commencement of the building of St Petersburg these savage creatures were still to be seen at large within the streets of the city.

It was not until the year 1718 that St Petersburg was proclaimed the capital of Russia. When the Tsar's decision was made public, the news caused the greatest possible dissatisfaction among Peter's old enemies, the priests, and the Old Russian party. The priests could never reconcile themselves to the Tsar's policy of progress and enlightenment, to which policy the party of the Old Russians were, from the first, no less bitterly opposed. Progress, said they, was not for Holy Russia, and was antagonistic to religion and the real interests of the most orthodox and holy

nation in the world. The very idea of deserting Moscow, mother of a thousand churches and cathedrals, and of establishing another metropolis far away upon the banks of the Neva, was repugnant to the feelings of priest and Old Russian alike. But no opposition of priest or party ever interfered with the projects of this strong man armed, and in spite of tears and protests, and much perturbation of the national spirit, the transference of the seat of government from Moscow to St Petersburg became an accomplished fact; and from 1718 onwards the last-named city has been the capital of Russia. There is probably no part of the original St Petersburg of 1718 now standing, the entire city—fortress, cathedrals, private houses, senate—having in the first instance been built of wood. St Isaac's Cathedral has been rebuilt three or four times since those days. This beautiful edifice, it may be noted, is not dedicated to the patriarch Isaac, who is not a saint, but to St Isaac of Dalmatia, upon whose 'day' the great Peter happened to be born. The monastery of St Alexander Nefsky is called after another of the patrons of the city, which boasts of three tutelary saints, including St Peter. St Alexander Nefsky (St Alexander of the Neva) was a warrior-saint, and drove the Swedes from the banks of the Neva some centuries before Peter the Great performed the same feat, so that in re-establishing themselves in the place where the metropolis now stands, the Russians considered that they were but returning to their own; indeed, a notification to that effect was borne aloft, banner-wise, in the triumphal procession which accompanied Peter upon his entry into Moscow after those victories at Schlüsselburg and Slotburg, which placed the Neva in his hands and made St Petersburg possible.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER VIII.—THE OLD ADAM.

OLIVIA said least. Her mother took Claude by the hand, and thanked him with real tears in her eyes, for after all she was an Irishwoman, who could be as emotional as possible when she chose. As for Mr Sellwood, he expressed himself as delightfully disappointed in the peer of whom he had heard so much. Jack struck him as being an excellent fellow, although not a golfer, which was a pity, and even apparently disinclined to take up the game—which might signify some recondite flaw in his character. So said the Home Secretary. But Olivia merely asked who had put all those roses in her room; and when Claude told her, she simply nodded, and took hardly any notice of the Duke that night. Nevertheless, she wore a handful of his flowers at her shapely waist. And she did thank him, in a way.

It was not the sweetest way in the world, as all her ways had been, these many weeks, in Jack's imagination. He was grieved and disappointed, but still more was he ashamed. He had taken a liberty. He had alienated his friend. Thus he

blamed himself, with bitter, wordless thoughts, and would then fall back upon his disappointment. His feelings were a little mixed. One moment she was not all that he had thought her; the next, she was more than all. She was more beautiful. Often he had tried to recall her face, and tried in vain, having seen her but once before, and then only for a few minutes. Now he perceived that his first impression, blurred and yet dear to him as it had been, had done but meagre justice to Olivia. He had forgotten the delicate dark eyebrows, so much darker than the hair. The girl's radiant colouring had likewise escaped him. It was like the first faint flush of an Australian dawn. Yet he had missed it in June, just as he had missed the liquid hazel of her eyes; their absolute honesty was what he remembered best; and, by a curious irony, that frank, fine look was the very one that she denied him now.

And so it was from the Friday evening, when the Sellwoods arrived, to the Monday morning when duty recalled the Home Secretary to St Stephen's. He obeyed the call in no statesmanlike frame of mind. He had spent the Sabbath in open sin upon the new-made links, and had been fitly punished by his own execrable play. The athletic agent had made an example of him; he felt that he might just as well have been in church (or rather in the private chapel attached to the Towers), reading the lessons for his son-in-law Francis Freke; and in the Saturday's 'four-some,' with the reverend gentleman on his side, the Cabinet minister had done little better. So he had departed very sorely against the grain, his white hairs bristling with discontent, a broken 'driver' hidden away in the depths of his port-manteau. And Olivia, seeing the last of him from amid the tall columns of the portico, felt heavy-hearted, because her father was also her friend.

Jack watched her at a distance. It did not occur to him that the girl's mother was already pitching him at the girl's head, daily and almost hourly, until she was weary of the very sound of his name. And though he felt he must have overstepped some mark in the matter of the flowers, he little dreamt how Miss Sellwood's maid had looked when she saw them, or what disgraceful satisfaction Lady Caroline had exhibited before her daughter on that occasion. He only knew that her Ladyship was treating him with a rather oppressive kindness, and that he would much sooner have had half-a-dozen words from Olivia, such as the first she had ever spoken to him.

And now the girl was unhappy; it was plain enough, even to his untutored eye; and he stepped forward with the determination of improving her spirits, without thinking of his own, which were not a little flat.

'You must find it dull up the country, Miss Sellwood, after London,' began Jack, not perhaps in his most natural manner. 'I—I wish to goodness you'd tell us of anything we could do to amuse you!'

'You are very good,' replied Olivia, 'but I don't

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require to be amused like a child. Thanks all the same. And as to finding the country dull, I never appreciate it so much as after a season in town.'

She was not looking at the Duke, but beyond him, into the hall. And encountering no other eyes there, her own grew softer, as did her tone, even as she spoke.

'You know this old place off by heart, Miss Sellwood, I expect?' pursued Jack, who had taken off his straw hat in her presence, being in doubt as to whether the portico ranked indoors or out.

'Oh, well, I have stayed here pretty often, you know,' said Olivia. 'What do you think of the place?'

'I can't hardly say. I've never seen anything else like it. It's far too good, though, for a chap like me; it's all so grand.'

'I have sometimes felt it a little too grand,' the girl ventured to observe.

'So have I!' cried Jack. 'You can't think how glad I am to hear you say that. It's my own feeling right down to the ground!'

'I don't mean to be rude,' continued Olivia confidentially, seeing that they were still unobserved, 'but I have often felt that I wouldn't care to live here altogether.'

'No?' said the Duke, in a new tone; he felt vaguely dashed; but his manner was rather one of apologetic sympathy.

'No,' she repeated; 'shall you like it?'

'Can't say. I haven't weakened on it yet, though it is too fine and large for a fellow. Shall I tell you what I've done? I've fixed up a little place for myself outside, where I can go whenever I get full up of the homestead here. I wonder—if it isn't too much to ask—whether you would let me show you the little spot I mean?'

'Where is it?'

'In the pines yonder, on the far side o' the tank.'

'The tank!'

'We call 'em tanks in Australia. I meant the lake. I could row you across, Miss Sellwood, in a minute. If only you'd let me!' And he met her doubtful look with one of frank, simple-hearted, irresistible entreaty.

'Come on!' said Olivia suddenly; and as she went, she never looked behind; for she seemed to feel her mother's eyes upon her from an upper window, and the hot shame of their keen approval made her tingle from head to foot. So she trod the close, fine, sunlit grass as far as possible from her companion's side. And he, falling back a little, was enabled to watch her all the way.

Olivia was very ordinarily attired. She wore a crisp white blouse, speckled with tiny scarlet spots, and a plain skirt of navy blue, just short enough to give free play to the small brown shoes whose high heels the Duke had admired in the portico. Two scarlet bands, a narrow and a broad, encircled her straw hat and her waist, with much the same circumference: and yet this exceedingly average costume struck Jack as the most delicious thing imaginable of its kind. He corrected another impression before they reached the lake. Olivia was taller than he had thought; she was at least five-feet-six; and she carried her slim, trim figure in a fine upstanding fashion that

took some of the roundness out of his own shoulders as he noted it this August morning.

'It's the back-block bend,' he remarked elliptically, in the boat.

His way with the oars was inelegant enough, without a pretence at feathering; but it was quite effectual; and Olivia, in the stern-sheets, had her back still presented to the Argus-eyes of the Towers. She answered him with a puzzled look, as well she might, for he had done no more than think aloud.

'What is that?' she said. 'And what are the back-blocks; and what do you mean?' for her puzzled look had lifted on a smile.

'I was thinking of my round shoulders. You get them through being all your time in the saddle, up in the back-blocks. All the country in Riverina—that is, all the fenced country—is split up into ten-mile blocks. And the back-blocks are the farthest from the rivers and from civilisation. So that's why they call it the back-block bend; it came into my head through seeing you. I never saw anybody hold themselves so well, Miss Sellwood—if it isn't too like my cheek to say so!'

The keel grounded as he spoke, and Olivia, as he handed her out, saw the undulating battlements and toppling turrets of the olden pile upside-down in the tremulous mirror of the lake. A moment later the pine-trees had closed around her; and, sure enough, in a distant window, Lady Caroline Sellwood lowered her opera-glasses with a sigh of exceeding great contentment.

'So you haven't forgotten your old life yet,' said the girl, as they stepped out briskly across the shortening shadows of the pines. 'I wish you would tell me something about it! I have heard it said that you lived in ever such a little hut, away by yourself in the wilderness.'

'I did so; and in a clump of pines the dead spit of these here,' said Jack, with a relish. 'When I saw these pines you can't think how glad I was! They were like old friends to me; they made me feel at home. You see, Miss Sellwood, that old life is the only one I ever knew, bar this; often enough it seems the reallest of the two. Most nights I dream I'm out there again; last night, for instance, we were lamb-marking. A nasty job, that; I was covered with blood from head to heels, and I was just counting the poor little beggars' tails, when one of the dead tails wriggled in my hand, and blowed if it wasn't Livingstone's! No, there's no forgetting the old life; I was at it too long; it's this one that's most like a dream.'

'And the hut,' said Olivia, with a rather wry face; 'what sort of a place was that?'

'I'll show you,' replied the Duke, in what struck the other as a superfluously confidential tone. 'It was a little bit of a place, all one room, with a galvanised iron roof and mother-earth for floor. It was built with the very pines that had been felled to make a clearing for the hut: so many uprights, and horizontal slabs in between. A great square fireplace and chimney were built out at one end, like the far end of a church; and over my bunk I'd got a lot of pictures from the *Australasian Sketcher* just stuck up anyhow; and if you weren't looking, you knocked your head against the ration-bags that hung from the

cross-beams. You slept inside, but you kept your bucket and basin on a bench'—

'Good heavens!' cried Olivia. And she stood rooted to the ground before a clearing and a hut that answered accurately to the Duke's description. The hut was indeed too new, the maker's stamp catching the eye on the galvanised roofing; and, in the clearing, the pine-stumps were still white from the axe; but the essentials were the same, even to the tin basin on the bench outside the door, with a bucket of water underneath. As for the wooden chimney, Olivia had never seen such a thing in her life; yet real smoke was leaking out of it into the pale blue sky.

'Is this a joke or a trick?' asked the girl, looking suspiciously on Jack.

'Neither; it's meant for the dead image of my old hut up the bush; and it's the little place I've fixed up for myself, here on the run, that I wanted to show you.'

'You've had it built during these last few weeks?'

'Under my own eye; and bits of it with my own hand. Old Claude thought it sheer cussedness, I know; perhaps you will, too; but come in, and have a look for yourself.'

And unlocking the padlock that secured it, he opened the door and stood aside for the young girl to enter. Olivia did so with alacrity; her first amazement had given way by now to undiluted interest; and the Duke followed her, straw hat in hand. There was a tantalising insufficiency of light within. Two small windows there were, but both had been filled with opaque folds of sackcloth in lieu of glass; yet the Duke pointed to them, as might his ancestors to the stained-glass lights in chapel and library, with peculiar pride; and, indeed, his strange delight in the hut, who cared so little for the Towers close at hand, made Olivia marvel when she came to think about it. Meanwhile she found everything as she had heard it described in the Australian hut, with one exception: there were no ration-bags to knock one's head against, because nobody made meals here. Also the pictures over the bunk were from the *Illustrated London News*, not from the *Sketcher*, which Jack had been unable to obtain in England; and they were somewhat unconvincingly clean and well-arranged. But the bunk itself was all that it might have been in the real bush; for it was covered over with Jack's own old blanket; whereon lay a purring, yellow ball, like a shabby sand-bank in a sea of faded blue.

'So this is Livingstone!' exclaimed the girl, stooping to scratch that celebrity's head.

'Yes; and there's old Tom and Black Maria in front of the fire. I lock them all three up during the day, for it isn't so like the bush in some ways as it is in others. They might get stolen any day, with so many people about; that's the worst of the old country; there was no other camp within five miles of me, on Carara.'

'It must have been dreadfully lonely!'

'You get used to it. And then every few months you would tramp into the homestead and—and speak to the boss,' said Jack, changing his mind and his sentence as he remembered how he had once shocked Claude Lafont.

Olivia took notice of the cats, at which Jack

stood by beaming. The kitten she had brought down from town in a basket. It lived in Olivia's room, but she now suggested restoring it to its own people. Jack, however, reminded her that it was hers, in such a tender voice, and proceeded to refer to her kindness at their first meeting, in so embarrassing a fashion, that the girl, seeking a change of subject, found one in the long, low bunk.

'I see,' said she, 'that you come here for your afternoon siesta.'

'I come here for my night's sleep,' he replied.

'Never!'

'Every night in life. You seem surprised. I did ask old Claude not to mention it—and—oh, well, it's no use keeping the thing a secret, after all! It suits me best—the open country and the solitude. It's what I'm accustomed to. The wind in the pines all around, I wake up and hear it every night, just like I did in the old hut. It's almost the same thing as going back to the bush to sleep; there's not two penn'orth of difference.'

'You'd like to go back altogether,' said the girl, affirming it as a fact; and yet her sweet eyes, gravely unsatisfied, seemed to peer through his into his soul.

'I don't say that, Miss Sellwood,' he protested. 'Of course it's a great thing for me to have come in for all this fortune and power—and it'll be a greater thing still once I can believe it's true! That's the trouble. The whole show's so like a dream. And that's where this little hut helps me; it's real, anyway; I can sight it. As for all the rest, it's still just a few too many for me; what's more, if I was to wake up this minute on Carara I shouldn't so very much mind.'

'I wonder,' said Olivia, with her fine eyes looking through him still. 'I just wonder!' And her tone set him wondering too.

'Of course,' he faltered, 'I should be mighty sorry to wake up and find I'd only dreamt you!'

'Of course,' she returned, with a laughing bow; but there had been an instant's pause; and she was studying the picture gallery over the bunk when she added: 'I see you've been long enough in England to acquire the art of making pretty speeches. And I must tell you at once that they never amuse me. At least,' she added more kindly, again facing him, 'not when they come from a person as a rule so candid as yourself.'

'But you mistake me; I was perfectly candid,' protested poor Jack.

'It won't do,' said the girl. 'And it's time we went.'

Olivia felt that she had made excellent friends with the Duke, that the more she saw of him the better she would probably like him, and that she could possibly be of use to him in little ways, if he would be sensible, and make no more than a friend of her. She was not so sure of him, however, as she could have wished; and she was anxious to leave well alone. It was thus the worst of luck that at this last moment she should perceive the suggestively white bouquet upon the high deal chimney-piece.

'You've been to a wedding,' she cried, 'and I've never heard a word about it! Whose was the wedding? Some of the tenantry, of course, or the bride would hardly have presented you with her bouquet!'

And she reached it down, and widened her pretty nostrils over the fading flowers; but they smelt of death; and their waxen whiteness had here and there the tarnish of a half-eaten apple.

'There was no bride,' said Jack, 'and no wedding.'

'Then what's the history of this? No! I beg your pardon; it isn't a fair question.'

'It is; perfectly. I had it made for a young lady. The head-gardener made it, but I told him first what I wanted. There was no word of a wedding; I only thought a nosegay would be a nice sort of thing to give a young lady, to show her she was mighty welcome; and I thought white was a nice clean sort of colour. But it turned out I was wrong; she wouldn't have liked it; it would only have made her uncomfortable; so, when I found out that, I just let it rest.'

'I see,' said Olivia, seeing only too clearly. 'Still, I'm not sure you were right: if I had been the girl'—

'Yes?'

The quick word altered the speech it had also interrupted.

'I should have thought it exceedingly kind of you,' said Olivia, after a moment's reflection.

She replaced the flowers on the chimney-board, and then led the way out among the pines.

'I'm sorry you were in such a hurry,' he said, overtaking her when he had locked up the hut. 'I might have made you some billy-tea. The billy's the can you make it in up the bush. I had such a work to get one over here! I keep some tea in the hut, and billy-tea's not like any other kind; I call it better; but you must come again and sample it for yourself.'

'We'll see,' said Olivia smilingly; but with that she lost her tongue; and together they crossed the lake in mutually low spirits. It was as though the delicate spell of simple friendship had been snapped as soon as spun between them, and the friends were friends no more.

On the lawn, however, in a hammock under an elm, they found a young man smoking. It was Mr Edmund Stubbs, who had arrived, with his friend the Impressionist, on the Saturday afternoon. He was smoking a pipe; but the ground beneath him was defiled with the ends of many cigarettes; and close at hand a deck-chair stood empty.

'I smell the blood of Mr Llewellyn,' said Olivia, coming up with the glooming Duke. 'He smokes far too many cigarettes!'

'He has gone for more,' said the man in the hammock.

'I wonder you don't interfere, Mr Stubbs; it must be so bad for him.'

'On the contrary, Miss Sellwood, it is the best thing in the world for him. A man must smoke something. And an artist must smoke cigarettes. You can tell what he does smoke, however, from his work. Pipe-work—in an artist—is ever coarse, banal, incredibly obvious, and only fit to hang in the front parlours of Brixton and Upper Tooting. Cigar-work is little better; but that of the cigarette is delicate, suggestive, fantastic if you will, but always artistic. Ivor Llewellyn's is cigarette-work.'

'How very interesting!' said Olivia.

'My colonial!' muttered the Duke.

At the same time they caught each other's eyes, turned away with one consent, nor made a sound between them until they were out of earshot of that hammock. And then they only laughed; yet the spell that had been broken was even thus made whole.

THE ASPEN AND ITS USES.

HOW MATCHES ARE MADE.

VARIABLE as may be the shade by the light-quivering aspen made, the wood of the aspen has come to occupy an important place in a very considerable modern industry. In the manufacture of matches this wood has become indispensable, because of certain natural properties—its large structure, ready combustibility, freedom from knots, and uniformity of substance. Many other woods are used in match-making, such as pine, poplar, linden, and birch; but, on the Continent especially, aspen is the favourite, because of the qualities we have mentioned and of the ease with which it can be worked. But it is only since 'Paraffin' and 'Safety' matches came into vogue that the value of the aspen was fully recognised. In the case of sulphur matches it is not necessary for the wood to absorb the composition for ignition; but when paraffin is used instead of sulphur, a porous wood is indispensable. The reason for this is that unless the paraffin penetrates into the wood, the matches will stick together, and the paraffin will become fluid again, even in moderate temperature. Thus, when safety-matches came to be made, a wood had to be sought that was light and spongy, and at the same time pleasing in appearance. Poplar was tried; but it is brittle, and is, moreover, too gray in colour. Birch, it was found, is apt to turn yellow, and it is not often procurable in large logs. Both poplar and birch, too, are slow in combustion; and in the case of 'safeties' rapid ignition is required. Pine and fir are readily combustible, but contain so much natural resin as to be unable to absorb much paraffin. And so it came about that aspen was selected, and something like a scramble for aspen wood began in Europe, and has become so severe that in Russia, Germany, and France state-aid has had to be invoked for the protection of the forests and the regulation of growth and exportation of this tree.

There is something more than an industrial interest in this introduction of the aspen among the common objects of the household. It was out of this wood, from which the commonplace match is made, that, according to tradition, the Cross of our Saviour was constructed; and the tree was so smitten with shame at the part it played in the Divine Tragedy that it has trembled ever since. A German legend gives another explanation of the quivering of the aspen. During the flight of Mary and Joseph into Egypt they came at night to a thick

forest, whereupon all the trees, with the sole exception of the aspen, began to pay reverence to the Holy Child. This disrespect on the part of the aspen was observed by Christ, who in consequence pronounced a curse against it; whereupon its leaves began to tremble, and have trembled ever since.

It is probably on the homeopathic principle that in old folk-medicine a decoction of aspen leaf was held to be an infallible specific for ague.

The Russians have a tradition that Judas Iscariot hanged himself on an aspen, and that that is why the leaves quiver. And the Buddhists say that the leaves are agitated out of respect for Buddha. The most widespread belief in Europe, however, was that the aspen was shamed for ever for having supplied the beam of the Cross.

Shakespeare's simile of the lily-hands that tremble like aspen leaves upon the lute and make the silken strings delight to kiss them, is pretty enough, but the association of the fair sex with the tree is not always complimentary. Honest Mistress Quickly might shake 'an 'twere an aspen leaf' at the very thought of 'swaggerers,' yet the aspen has from ancient times been the emblem of the restlessness of woman. It was otherwise known as 'Quick-beam;' and of it Gerard, the old Herbalist, remarks: 'In English, Aspe and Aspen tree may also be called Tremble, after the French name, considering it is the matter whereof women's tongues were made, which poets and some others report, *which seldom cease wagging.*'

There is another thing about the aspen—its claims of long descent. It belongs, like the Scotch fir, to one of the oldest families in the forest world. Indeed it was one of the primeval trees of Europe, and long centuries before it nestled in the match-box has rustled in the hedgerows when other leaves were motionless. And in mediæval times the wood must have been highly prized for some purposes, for an Act was passed in the reign of Henry V. to forbid the consumption of aspen except for the making of arrows, and enacting a penalty of one hundred shillings from all who should use it in the making of clogs and pattens. What other uses it had one can hardly enumerate now; but in Spenser's time it was certainly considered good for staves; and in later times it has found favour both for the panelling of rooms and the making of gunpowder.

In Russia (where, as we now see, a new use has been found for it) the aspen has for long been associated with witchcraft. It was (and perhaps still is) held that when a witch died a piece of aspen wood ought to be placed in her grave to keep her from carrying on her evil work after death. Do the Russian peasants, one wonders, see nothing of witchcraft in the lucifer match made out of aspen wood?

As to who first invented the friction-match—for so long known as the 'lucifer'—accounts differ. Like many great inventions, this seems

to have evolved from more than one source. Some forty years ago there died at Stockton-on-Tees an apothecary named John Walker, on whose behalf it has been claimed that he was the real inventor, though he considered the thing so trifling that he would not take out a patent for it. The story goes that, in or about 1827, Walker was preparing some lighting mixture in his shop for his own use. He had dipped a splint into the mixture, and it afterwards fell on the hearth and was accidentally rubbed violently against the stone. It ignited, and at once gave the idea to Walker of the friction-match. He carried out the idea by selling matches in boxes, on the side of which he fastened a piece of doubled sand-paper; the flaming being produced by a pressure of the thumb and a sharp pull of the match between the papers. These matches were sold at the price of one shilling per box of fifty, so that if the sale was small, the profit must have been large.

Another claimant is Isaac Holden, the son of a pitman at Nitshill, near Glasgow. The pitman was a thrifty Cumberland man who was able to give his son a good education, and Isaac eventually became classical master and lecturer on chemistry (queer combination) at an academy in Reading. There he had to get up early for his studies, and was much bothered with the flint and steel, until one morning he had what he called a happy thought. 'Of course I knew,' he told a Committee of the House of Commons inquiring into the patent laws, 'as other chemists did, the explosive material that was necessary in order to produce instantaneous light; but it was very difficult to obtain a light on wood by the explosive material, and the idea occurred to me to put sulphur under the explosive mixture. I did that, and published it in my next lecture and showed it. There was a young man in the room whose father was a chemist in London, and he wrote to his father about it, and shortly afterwards lucifer matches were issued to the world.'

Isaac Holden (now Sir Isaac) believed he was the first inventor, but, like Walker, he regarded the thing as too trifling to be worth the trouble and expense of taking out a patent. But this class-lecture of Holden's was in 1829, whereas Walker's match was on sale in 1827.

We have explained why the aspen wood is peculiarly adapted for the paraffin match. Another quality it possesses is in being very flakable, and flaking is necessary to keep the wood porous and to work it to the greatest advantage. To flake the wood a knife is made to revolve round a log rotating on its own axis. Then the flakes are cut into ribbons of the thickness and width of the match to be manufactured, and these ribbons are laid in even layers and cut into square splints. It is a characteristic of the aspen to preserve uniformity in its annual 'rings' of growth, and, therefore, the ribbons or splints into which the wood is cut are perfectly uniform, which is not the case with many other woods. Then the absence of grain in aspen wood permits of flaking into very thin shavings, which are made into match-boxes, and this gives it additional value, since

the material for both match and box can be produced by the same machine from the same wood. Fir and pine cannot be manipulated so easily to produce this double result, because the annual 'rings' of growth in them differ a good deal in thickness, and the knife is apt to slip in cutting the ribbons. It is said of aspen wood that all the ribbons from one log will be practically identical.

In selecting wood match-manufacturers require pieces free from rotten pith and knots, straight, and of loose texture. The aspen is considered suitable for match-making when the trunk has attained a diameter of eight inches; but those of from ten to twenty inches diameter are best. The size of the trunk is no exact index to age, as the rapidity of growth varies with soil and other conditions; but, as a rule, trees of from twenty to thirty-five years old are preferred to younger growths; and at these ages the tree should yield the smallest proportion of waste.

According to recent official returns, the match-factories of Germany use about five million cubic feet of aspen wood annually, of which about three and a half million cubic feet are imported from Russia. These factories are situated in Silesia, Pomerania, Sleswick-Holstein, Bavaria, the Rhine Provinces, Alsace-Lorraine, and the Duchy of Anhalt. The Silesian factories depend mostly on the Silesian woods, and on Poland, Galicia, and Hungary. There are numerous forests in Silesia, but each forest only provides a few loads of aspen per annum. This makes it difficult and expensive to collect supplies. A cubic metre of aspen wood costs from seventeen to twenty-five shillings delivered at the railway station nearest to the forest, the price varying with the diameter; and it can be brought into Silesia as cheaply from Poland and Hungary as from the Silesian forests.

The Pomeranian factories are supplied chiefly from Riga, Libau, Windau, and St Petersburg. To these ports the wood is brought down from the mountain forests in rafts when the snows melt in the spring. It is in suitable logs of from sixteen to twenty-three feet in length. Russian aspen is imported through Königsberg, Danzig, Flensburg, Lübeck, Amsterdam, Stettin, Antwerp, and Bremen. In Anhalt some aspen is grown, but the factories have to import Russian wood also. In Westphalia it is almost entirely Russian wood that is used, imported *via* Amsterdam and taken thence by rail.

Owing to the growing demand for it, and the decrease of other sources of supply, the price of Russian aspen is increasing annually. So serious is the prospect considered in Germany that several Chambers of Commerce and other bodies have petitioned the government to take vigorous action and to order some strict and systematic attention to be paid in the forests to the growth of the aspen. In France there is a similar agitation; while in Russia the match-manufacturers want their government to prohibit the exportation of aspen wood altogether, so that they may have the whip-hand over their German and French competitors. It is now suggested that America should come into the field and supply the match-makers of Europe with aspen wood,

which is said to abound in the United States, and to be at present little used there. Such is the interesting industrial position of a tree with a strange history and curious attributes.

PHIL'S PARD.

CHAP. II.—JIM ANNERSLEY, OF CARVILLE.

THE news of Phil's projected absence and the reason for it came as a third shock to Plummer's that day.

'A new pard! An' you're streakin' it through all these yer murderin' Injuns to Cruz to meet him!—You don't say, Phil?' gasped one.

'I do say,' returned Phil warmly, for once vouchsafing to descend to something akin to everyday loquacity. 'When my late pard, Haliday, passed in his chips, the last words he says to me was, "Phil, hand over my pile to my cousin, Jim Annersley of Carville," or words to that effect. Wall, I reckon I wrote to this yer Annersley, an' put the thing squar' to him. "Here's Haliday's pile," says I. "Come out an' fetch it ef you're real grit. Moreover, thar's Haliday's share in the claim. I wanter do the fair thing, an' ef you air purty hefty, an' kin hump yerself, an' I cotton to you an' you cotton to me, then I reckon I'll hev you for my pard." An' this yer Annersley writes back—which I got his letter this mornin'—an' after ladlin' out two or three pages of hogwash 'bout thanks an' gratioode, an' cetera, an' cetera, he says—he says—wall, I guess I can't reck'lect the precise words, cos he 'pears to be a powerful high-toned cuss at shovin' a pen, but what he means ter say is thet he's on it—jest that—an will start for Plummer's next day, which is to say, thet he'll be dumped down by the stage to-morrow at Cruz, right in the middle of a Injun scare, with forty miles of a desert trail atween him an' here!'

'But you ain't goin' alone, air you, Phil? I calkerlate one man ain't of much account for fightin' Injuns!' remarked Hank Potter.

'I ain't layin' to fight no Injuns—I'm goin' to show a tenderfoot how to keep outen their trucks,' replied Phil. 'I've arsked this yer Annersley to come out, an' I'm goin' to stand by him through this yer danger ef it is one. Ez for you, all you have to do is to throw out scouts, an' keep yer eyes skinned agen a surprise party, an' ef you air attacked, stand the varmints off till the troops come up.'

Seventy-three out of the seventy-five total population of Plummer's (said population being exclusively male) returned to Tillipier's Bar accompanied by the half-breed, Lorenzo; and having appointed Hank Potter Brevet Commander-in-Chief, pending Phil's return from Cruz, at once dispersed to look up arms, after which scouts were sent out and hasty preparations made for barricading the camp.

Surly Tim lingered behind, for he had still something to say, and it did not take him long to say it.

'Which it 'pears to me,' he began as usual, 'that you hev showed yourself to-day, Phil, the whitest, rattiest galoot west of the Rockies, an' I don't keer a continental whar the next comes. I ain't much of a hand at makin' friends, but I like a man of your heft; an' when I like a man I freeze

to him. Phil, you air a bully boy with a glass eye, an' I'm goin' along of you to help fetch this yer new pard of yourn from Cruz. Put it thar!' he concluded, holding out a huge grimy paw. And Phil put it there, and a sense of strong, honest confidence passed from heart to heart over the connection formed by that hearty handshake.

Early the following morning the mail-carrier's mount being refreshed by its night's rest, Phil, Tim, and Lorenzo, mounted on wiry mustangs, were galloping swiftly over the sun-dried, dusty plains for Cruz. The station of Pueblo de la Cruz—popularly known in its abbreviated form—was the lonely habitation of a Mexican, called Luis—nobody knew what else—who preferred to live on the scanty subsidy granted him by the Stage Company, and the plunder, in the shape of charges, to be got out of the stray visitors the stage put down there, which left him at liberty to indulge his national indolence by smoking cigarettes all day, and singing

'Soy purita mejicana;
Nada tengo español'

to his guitar in the everlasting sunshine; he preferred all this, I say, to drudging in the mines, or rounding-up beef on the ranches, for, in the words of his song, Luis was 'pure Mexican,' and had therefore a soul above physical labour.

The station, which took its name from the ruins of an ancient pueblo near, as do so many places in South California, Arizona, and New Mexico, was an adobe building with a shed for the stage cattle behind. The only other regular inhabitants beside the proprietor being an Indian boy and the half-breed, Lorenzo, it was not a particularly desirable residence when the Apaches were out on the warpath, for, as Surly Tim cynically observed, 'Hanky-pankyin' on a git-ar ain't of much account fur fightin' of Injuns.'

As, late in the afternoon, the three travellers rode their jaded beasts up the trail to the station, Luis, resplendent in a crimson silk sash, natty blue jacket with silver buttons, and gorgeous silver ear-rings, was loolling on a bench by the door of the building, singing the refrain of some Mexican serenade, as he strummed the strings of his guitar.

'Say, Luis! stage in?' inquired Phil, springing off his mustang.

The Mexican nodded affirmatively, and went on with his singing.

'Was thar a tenderfoot sot down here— a young inncrrent from down East of the name of Jim Annersley, ez might ha' been inquiren' for Philip Marpleson, Esquire, of Plummer's?'

Luis nodded again.

'Then whar the thunder is he? You ain't let him streak it by himself across the desert with Arrow Nose skirmishin' round the trail? 'Cos ef you hev'—

'No, no!' replied Luis quickly; 'Jim Annersley's in there, asking for milk an' crackers,' and he indicated the room on the right of the entrance.

'Milk and crackers!' echoed Phil. 'Lordy, Tim! I've hed some mighty quar experiences in my time, but this yer lays over all! Durn my peaky old hide ef ever I thought I'd hev to dry-nuss a young Eastern jay on milk an' crackers

till I could git him home to his mammy agen! Howsomever, I'll jest chip in an' prospect him.'

'Bueno!' muttered Luis, and his mouth widened into an expansive grin that showed his white teeth, as his fingers strayed over the strings, feeling for the right chord to echo the laugh of his voice; and Phil disappeared into the building.

A moment elapsed—only one—and then Phil came flying out again in a hurry, hatless and breathless. His face was as pale as his sunburnt skin could possibly permit it, and his eyes started from their sockets as though he had seen a ghost. Utter surprise; abject, helpless misery; cowardly, despondent fear, were in turn depicted on his face, chasing one another over his usually immovable features like a procession of dissolving views. He who had faced death in a score of horrible forms without flinching a muscle or turning a hair, had been utterly, unequivocally *frightened* by the appearance of a young tenderfoot.

Surly Tim stared, open-eyed and open-mouthed, and scratched his head in dire wonder at the sight of what he would hitherto have staked his pile was a sheer impossibility—Philosifer Phil in a fluster!

'Which it 'pears to me, Phil, you air skeered!' he observed at length.

Phil gripped his companion's arm convulsively with one hand, while he wiped the sweat from his brow with his other sleeve. Then he gave one hurried, fearful glance in the direction of the room from which he had so precipitately retreated, and gasped, in a hoarse whisper:

'I'm eternally flummoxed! This yer Annersley— Say, Tim, was you ever hugged by a b'ar till you heeard yer own bones crunchin' in yer body like ore in a crusher? D'yer know what it is ter see a lot of Apaches lightin' up a fire, knowin' thet fire was to roast the livin' flesh offen you? Wall, them things ain't in it fur obfuscatin' a man like this. Tim, this yer Jim Annersley's a *petticoat*! an' thet's what laid me out!'

'A petticoat!' ejaculated Surly Tim.

'Ay, a gal, you can bet yer gum boots on thet!'

'Which it seems to me, Phil, this yer job hed better be liquidated. Let's liquor!'

'You kin go in with Luis and pisen yerself, Tim, an' I'll jine yer presently; but jest now I've got to wrestle with this yer onusual situation,' Phil replied lugubriously. And so the two disappeared through the door, and, Lorenzo having long before led the horses off, the philosopher was left alone to 'wrestle.'

It was a hard nut to crack. As he sat with his eyes fixed on the ground, trying to get to the kernel of it, a tall, fair girl stepped lightly across the threshold, and placed one white shapely hand on his shoulder. Phil looked up, and his troubled gaze met the laughing blue eyes of Jim Annersley.

'I am afraid my mad freak has rather taken you by surprise, Mr Marpleson,' she said, in a low sweet voice. 'I thought it would.'

'An' I calkerlate it hes!'

'You see, Mr Marpleson, my proper name is Jemima, but I was always'—

'Scuse me, miss,' interrupted Phil solemnly; 'Ef you'll jest hold yer hosses—I beg pardon, I mean ef you'll jest 'scuse my absence fur a few

minutes, I'll git yer drift a little cl'arer,' and he bolted hurriedly into the room which served upon occasion as a bar.

'Tim, jest call me "Mister Marpleson" fur a spell until I git sorter accustomed to it. It ruther throws me off when this gal "mister's" me.'

'Thar!' he resumed, as he rejoined Miss Annersley; 'yer kin jest toot yer horn now, an' mebbe I'll be able to tumble!'

'I—I'm afraid I don't quite understand what you mean?'

'Wall, you see, you ain't accustomed to the climate yet, an' I ain't jest what you might call a lady's man. Howsomever, what I mean is, jest you ladle out what you've got to say, an' I'll try to ketch on.'

'Oh! Well, you see, Mr Marpleson, my real name being *Jemima*, my father got into the way of calling me *Jim*, and, somehow, the abbreviation stuck to me. I was always known as *Jim* among my acquaintances—and everybody is acquainted in a little place like *Carville*. Since father died, I've been the book-keeper in the store at *Carville*. When you sent me that letter about poor cousin *Harry*, and about my coming out West if I was real grit, it was all so plain that you were under the impression that I was a man, and it was so tedious being chained to a desk all day entering up accounts of cheeses and hardware, and—and I was rather annoyed by a fat, red-haired Irish grocery man who would persist in making love to me, that I just jumped at the chance of a trip to *Arizona*. It was such a splendid idea—real fun! I thought I'd just let you see that an *Illinois* girl *was* real grit. So I just took a month's holiday, and here I am; and now you're real mad because I did as you suggested, Mr Marpleson.'

'Now, you're off it—cl'ar off it,' Phil replied, with something like his old composure. 'I ain't mad—only flummoxed; but I reckon we'll strike the right lead ef we only sink fur enough.'

'But why are you "flummoxed," as you call it, Mr Marpleson?' she went on. 'I should be sorry to think that an old friend of cousin *Harry*'s had been seriously inconvenienced by the madcap whim of a willful girl! Pray forgive me for playing my little trick on you, and help me enjoy my little adventure. I want to see *Plummer*'s, so that I can say I have seen a real mining camp, and then, when you and I have transacted our little business, I shall go back to *Carville* and brag about it all my life.'

'I'm afeard you can't git to *Plummer*'s this trip.'

'What's to hinder me?'

'Injuns!'

The girl's face turned a trifle pale, and the mirth died out of her laughing eyes, giving place to a look of deep anxiety.

'Then there is some truth in it after all, and they told me on the stage it was only a foolish report, and that the men with guns who rode along with us were only there for appearance sake, to pacify the fears of the passengers,' she faltered.

'Then, I reckon they was playin' it off on yer,' replied Phil serenely. 'Anyhow, your best game is to stop jest whar' you are until the stage goes through back agen in three days, when you will be pretty safe with an armed escort, an' I'll send on *Haliday*'s pile to *Carville*.'

'Where were the Indians when you last heard of them?' she asked.

'Conyn's Ranch.'

'And how far is that?'

'Fifty miles from here, and thirty from *Plummer*'s.'

'Then I'm going to *Plummer*'s!' Miss *Annersley* remarked, quietly yet determinedly.

'Which it 'pears to me,' observed *Surly Tim*, who had come out of the station and overheard the latter portion of the conversation, in undisguised admiration—'which it 'pears to me, miss, that fur a petticoat you air a rustler! Put it thar!' and when she acted upon his entreaty, he gazed on the little, soft, white hand that lay in his huge, dirty fist, and did not know what to do with it.

'You kin ride?' inquired *Phil*.

Jim nodded, and shook a wisp of yellow hair out of its bondage beneath her hat across her pretty freckled forehead.

Phil looked up and down her round lithe figure as she stood before him, gracefully swaying to and fro to the rhythm of *Luis*'s guitar from within. Then his eyes met hers, and they looked at each other for some seconds.

'What are you thinking about now, Mr Marpleson? *Luis*'s singing, eh?' she asked at length.

'No; *Luis*'s trousers.'

'*Luis*'s trousers! What?—'

'I've jest been chawin' it over, an' it 'pears to me that a pair of 'em would fit you purty well.'

In an instant the colour of hot indignation surged to her face, and drawing herself majestically to her full height, she demanded, with a quivering lip:

'Is it generous—is it manly to insult a lone woman!'

'That ain't it,' replied *Phil*; 'the question afore this yer meetin' is: How air you goin' to ride forty miles over a rough trail in a Mexican saddle—and, mebbe, hev to ride fur yer life—unless you'—'

'I won't hear you! I won't listen another minute to your cowardly insults!' she interrupted passionately; and with one stamp of her foot, she turned, and disappeared through the door-way.

Phil sat silently for some time, then turning to *Surly Tim*, he remarked philosophically:

'I calkerlate human natur' in a gal is jest like a deposit in a gold claim—you can't reckon it up. Jest when you think you hev struck it rich, you come to a fault or bed-rock; an' jest when you think the claim's played out, and ain't worth shucks, you strike a jeweller's shop. Human natur', he continued thoughtfully, 'is like a hand at poker—when you see a man chip to fill, or go one better, you kin reckon thet he lies some keards in his hand thet he sots some store on, an' yet he ain't sartin to rake in the pool; but when thar's a gal in the game, it's cut-throat euchre without trumps, an' the right bower up somebody's sleeve!'

'Which it 'pears to me you air 'bout c'reck. An' now, I'll jest prospect round a bit an' see ef the coast's cl'ar,' remarked *Surly Tim*; and, as he suited the word to the action, *Philossifer* *Phil* was left alone to ruminate on human nature and the exigencies of the present situation.

It was just on the point of sundown, and *Surly Tim* had not returned from his self-imposed

scouting expedition, when Miss Jemima Annersley stole off to Phil's side, and sat down beside him.

'Forgive me, Mr Marpleson!' she began, in a low tone, with no trace of resentment in it; 'I was hasty. I can see it all now. You were right, and I was wrong. This is no place for a weak, helpless woman. I will do as you wish—stay here until the stage returns, and then go straight back to Carville. You—you don't think the Indians are likely to attack us here? Oh, I thought I was a brave, heroic woman to come out here alone; and now I know I'm only a foolish, wilful girl.' The last words came with a sob, and finished in a shower of tears.

Phil shifted uneasily on his seat. Being entirely foreign to the ways of women, he was greatly affected by her weeping.

'You—you don't think, miss, you could mebbe jest shut off them hydraulics! 'Cos thar ain't no need to be skeered permiscus-like. Ef thar is anything you want, give it a name, an' I'll make that Mexican greaser, Luis, git it you. Thar's no danger to-night, for Injuns don't fight in the dark, so you kin turn in an' sleep ez comfortable ez ef you was a babby in yer mother's arms. Ez fur anything else—wall, I reckon Surly Tim an' me's here to look after you, an' Injuns or no Injuns, we'll see you safe on the stage agen, s'elp me!'

The girl gave him one swift glance; then, seized by a sudden impulse, she took his horny hand in hers, and pressed a hasty kiss of gratitude upon it.

'I think I'm beginning to understand you better now,' she murmured, and turning quickly, she vanished.

That night, while Surly Tim snored peacefully on the bunk in the room allotted to them, Philosopher Phil sat watching the stars by the window as he nursed his repeating-rifle until well on to dawn, when Surly Tim took his place, and he lay down, and once Tim heard him mumble:

'A fat, red-haired, Irish grocery man!'

You see Philip Marpleson was beginning to take a strong interest in Jim Annersley—as any big-hearted man of thirty-eight might take an interest in a pretty, wilful, unprotected girl of twenty.

JOHN THOMSON OF DUDDINGSTON.

THE ARTIST OF THE MANSE.

THE ranks of Scottish literature have been largely recruited from 'sons of the manse,' and the world has recently been kept pretty well informed of that fact; but it is not so generally known that art, too, has found a home beneath the minister's roof.

John Thomson, who in his day was deemed by many the equal of Turner as a landscape-painter, and who must still be assigned a foremost place among Scottish artists, was not only a 'son of the manse,' but a minister to boot. His father was minister of the Ayrshire parish of Dailly; his grandfather and great-grandfather were both ministers. He came, therefore, of a clerical race, and whence the artistic strain in him was derived no one could guess. But there it was, and it soon

showed itself; for, before the lad was in his teens, he had begun to adorn, or, as his mother thought, deface, the white walls of the Ayrshire manse with 'counterfeit presentments' of nature, worked in with charred wood and candle-snuffings. But it was not until his father informed John that his destined vocation was the ministry that the art-spirit within him asserted itself in revolt. He implored his father to let him be a painter. One can fancy the feelings of the old Scottish Puritan on hearing this appeal. There was small sympathy with art among the 'respectable classes' during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when John Thomson was born; and it must have been a sore blow to the worthy minister of Dailly to find a son of his hankering after the frivolous and feckless pursuit of painting in preference to the godly and reputable calling of the ministry. But he was a kindly-hearted man, and his answer to the appeal was to lay his hand gently on the lad's head, and bid him get away to his room, study his verbs, and put all such nonsense as painting out of his thoughts.

To all appearance, John Thomson from that moment acquiesced in his father's views, and accepted his fate. At the age of fourteen he went up to Glasgow University, and a year later migrated to Edinburgh, where his eldest brother Thomas, who had abandoned the ministry for the law, was a student.

Thomas Thomson was a 'youth of parts,' and lived to be famous as the greatest antiquarian lawyer of his time. Even as a student he made his mark, and among his intimate friends were Francis Jeffrey, the future Lord Advocate, and one of the founders of the *Edinburgh Review*, William Erskine, afterwards Lord Kinnedder, William Clerk of Eldin (the original of Darsie Latimer in *Redgauntlet*), and the great Wizard of the North himself, Walter Scott.

Thomas Thomson's 'Sunday Breakfasts' in Bristo Street became notable reunions, and his younger brother John, a quiet, shy, gawky lad, would sit there silently, drinking in the discourse of these nimble wits, for John, though no talker, was an admirable listener.

But all this while, unknown to the good minister of Dailly, John Thomson had been sedulously cultivating in secret the art which he loved. The greater part of his vacations was spent in sketching tours, and he took lessons from Alexander Nasmyth, an artist of some note, and father of the more famous Patrick Nasmyth, often termed 'The British Hobbema.'

Of music, too, John Thomson was almost as passionately fond as of painting. Few amateurs of the day equalled him on violin or flute.

On the 17th of July 1799, having then just completed his twenty-first year, John Thomson was licensed by the Presbytery of Ayr as a preacher of the gospel. Less than a year later, 24th April 1800, he was ordained minister of Dailly, in succession to his father, who died early

in 1799. In the year 1801 he took to himself a wife, and it was thought he would settle down into a staid and sober minister. But art was too strong for theology. So far from curbing his artistic longings, the young minister gave them free scope. Douce elders shook their heads as they discussed the frivolous and worldly tastes of their new pastor. All this painting and fiddling at the manse was nothing short of a scandal. Some, in righteous wrath, forsook the kirk of Dailly, and preferred walking to another kirk, seven miles distant, to sitting under a minister whose heart was more in his easel than his pulpit. Others took upon them to administer wholesome rebuke to their flighty pastor. But John Thomson was a man of humour, and had a way of turning the tables upon his godly monitors which surprised and discomfited them.

On one occasion, at the half-yearly communion in the neighbouring parish of Barr, John Thomson, as the youngest minister of the Presbytery, having officiated first in the impromptu pulpit erected in the churchyard, sat down and gave place to an older minister, as the custom was in those days. 'Looking round upon the rustic congregation,' says Mr William Baird, to whose *Memoir of John Thomson* we must express our indebtedness, 'his artistic eye was arrested by a strikingly picturesque face and figure from the hills—that of a venerable old man, whose long gray locks, light-blue coat, with large brass buttons, knee-breeches, buckles in his shoes, and quaint old three-cornered hat, proclaimed him one of a former century. The temptation was too strong to be resisted, even on so solemn an occasion, and Thomson's pencil and paper were at once in requisition, sketching the physiognomy of douce old John Allan.' This awful act of sacrilege was witnessed by some members of the Presbytery. A council was held, and, though it was decided not to 'make a case of it,' yet the oldest of their number was deputed to call upon the young minister and admonish him severely. He did so, and John Thomson listened to the rebuke and admonition silently, and apparently with much submission—his nervous fingers playing restlessly with his pencil on the table showed, however, that he was deeply agitated by the solemn words that fell from his monitor. The old man, pleased with the young pastor's reverential and penitential air, brought his homily to a close with satisfaction. Imagine his feelings when, instead of the expected expression of contrition, the young minister coolly held up before his astonished eyes a thumb-nail caricature of the senior, and audaciously asked, 'What auld cankered carl do ye think that is?'

There was more smartness and rudeness than wit in that retort, and, *pace* Mr William Baird, we do not think it was a happy example of either the good sense or the good feeling of the Rev. John Thomson.

A far more pleasing story is the following:

We have already mentioned the minister's proficiency as a musician. He played the violin and the violoncello admirably, and for hours in the long winter evenings he would delight his friends with his skill. But the more straitlaced of his parishioners looked upon it as a scandal to his profession that so much of his time should

be spent on what they considered frivolous amusements, and several of the elders were moved to wait upon him for purposes of remonstrance. 'They did so,' says Mr William Baird, 'and were most courteously received by the minister and his wife. Having explained the object of their visit, they proceeded apologetically to refer to the rumours that were floating about in the parish, urging that it was not so much "the big gaucie fiddle" they objected to, as "the wee sinfu' fiddle!" Thomson heard them good-naturedly, and then asked them if they would like to hear a tune. Though not quite prepared for this, the elders made no objections to the proposal; the violoncello was brought into the parlour, and he played a selection of fine old Scotch airs with such pathos and feeling that, as a granddaughter of his has told us, they were fairly melted to tears, and so impressed with what they called its "holy hum," that no more objections were ever raised to his playing either "the big gaucie fiddle" or the "wee sinfu' fiddle!"'

After five years at Dailly, John Thomson, through the influence of his brother Thomas and his fast friend, Walter Scott, was presented by the Marquis of Abercorn to the benefice of Duddingston, two and a half miles from Edinburgh. Here the painter-pastor found himself in a more congenial sphere, within easy reach of that brilliant circle of letters and culture which then made Scotland's capital indeed 'a modern Athens.'

Hitherto Thomson had distributed his paintings and sketches gratuitously among his friends, hardly realising that they had any monetary value. But at Duddingston closer contact with the world of art revealed to him the pleasing fact that his pictures were a marketable commodity. The first money he received for a painting was fifteen guineas. But when the sum was offered him he thought it so much above the value of the picture that he would not accept it, until his friend Williams, the well-known painter of Greek landscape, assured him that the work was worth three times as much as the amount named.

From that time John Thomson had no hesitation in selling his pictures, and for many years his average income from this source was not less than £1800—a very large sum in those days, and a solid proof of the high reputation he held. His industry, however, must have been extraordinary, for the prices he put upon his pictures were not high. For a painting 30 inches in length by 25 to 28 inches in breadth, he asked twenty-five guineas—for one 48 inches by 36, fifty guineas. Some of his wealthy patrons, such as the Duke of Buccleuch, no doubt paid him a higher figure, but to make an average annual income of £1800 he must have turned out at least forty pictures in a year.

It would have been well for his fame, perhaps, if he had been gifted with less facility and rapidity of production. So hurried was he in his work that just before the time for the annual Exhibition at Edinburgh half-a-dozen pictures might sometimes be seen lying out on the grass in front of the manse, that the sun might dry the colours. And yet, with all his hurry, it cannot be said that Thomson was slovenly in his execution. In proof of which, take the

lovely view of Dunluce Castle, reproduced in Mr Baird's biography. That picture was painted for Professor Wilson under the following circumstances.

'Christopher North' had come over on a visit to Duddingston Manse, and expressed a wish to purchase one of the minister's pictures. Thomson had none by him which he thought suitable, 'but,' said he, 'I won't be long in painting you one,' and there and then began, and nearly finished, that fine landscape, whilst the professor sat looking on in mingled wonder and admiration.

And yet, with all his devotion to art, the minister of Duddingston was not neglectful of his pastoral duties; and it is singular that even the 'unco guid' in his own parish, whatever they may have *thought*, never made any open complaints of the secular pursuits which absorbed so much of their pastor's time and thoughts. One of the most notable incidents in his ministry was the admission of Walter Scott as a member of kirk session, and a 'ruling elder' in the Church of Scotland. No mention of this fact is made in Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter. Possibly Scott was in after years unwilling to let the world know of his having been not only a member, but an office-bearer of the church which he subsequently forsook, and apparently avoided all mention of the matter, even to his son-in-law.

Thomson, much as he must have grudged every minute taken from his beloved easel, found time to compose excellent sermons, which had the merit, in the eyes of some of his hearers at any rate, of being short. Whenever he was disposed to protract his discourse, however, there was a stern monitor to check him in the person of one of his elders, Louis Cauvin, well-known then as a successful professor of the French language and literature. Cauvin detested long sermons, and being on terms of familiarity with Thomson, adopted a peculiar course to shorten the minister's homilies. He had a front seat in the gallery, facing the pulpit, and, as soon as he thought the sermon had lasted long enough, he would take out his big old-fashioned watch, with its heavy chain and seals, and, leaning over the gallery, gently swing the timepiece to and fro till it attracted the preacher's eye. The hint was invariably taken, and the discourse brought to a close as quickly as decorum would permit.

But there were times when the artist was too strong for the minister. One Sunday, the first, second, and third bells had rung out, and still there was no sign of the pastor. The beadle, old John Richardson (himself a character), hurried to the manse, and, to his horror, found the minister at his easel, painting as if for dear life.

'Do ye no ken, sir,' said the shocked official, 'that the bells are dune ringin', and the folk are a' in the kirk?'

But the minister was so intent on realising the 'effect' he was introducing into his picture that he called out:

'Oh! John, man, just gang and ring the bell for anither five minutes, till I get in this bonny wee bit o' sky.'

That same worthy beadle deserves a word or two, for he had a pawky humour. Thomson had to be away one Sabbath, and had engaged a young

country minister to take his place. On his return he asked John how the young man had got on. 'Deed, sir,' said John, 'juist middlin'. It was guid coorse country wark, ower plain and simple for me. I like thae sermons best that jumbles the judgment and confuses the sense, and 'od, sir, there's naeboddy can dae that sae weel as yourself.'

A mutilated version of this anecdote, by the way, is given by Dean Ramsay in his 'Reminiscences.'

Of the practical character of the minister's charity the following anecdote will serve as an example.

A poor woman came in sore distress to the manse, and after pouring out her tale of woe, exclaimed:

'Eh! Mr Tamson, wad ye no' put up a bit prayer for me?'

In response to the appeal, the minister slipped five shillings into her hand, and whispered:

'Tak' that, Betty, my guid woman; it's likely to do ye mair guid than any prayers I can put up for ye.'

In such unostentatious charity John Thomson parted with the price of many a picture.

Happy in the exercise of his art, in the sympathy of congenial friends, and in the companionship of a devoted wife, John Thomson's lines seemed indeed to be cast in pleasant places. But such happiness was too good to last. In the spring of 1809 the sudden death of his wife turned sunshine into gloom. But, after a season of great darkness and depression, he found solace again in the art which he loved, and plied his brush more vigorously than ever.

From Edinburgh there came troops of friends to visit him, among them Walter Scott, Francis Jeffrey, Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, Sir David Brewster, Professor Wilson ('Christopher North'), and James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd. Casual strangers of distinction, too, visiting 'the modern Athens,' thought it a duty to the genius of the artist-minister to pay a pilgrimage to the Duddingston Manse.

Sir Francis Grant, Sir David Wilkie, William Bell Scott, Mr Edward Horsman, M.P., afterwards Chief Secretary for Ireland (Dizzy's 'superior person'), have all left on record the pleasure they derived from their intercourse with the Scottish landscape-painter. Even the great Turner himself, jealous and boorish as he was, liked a 'crack' with Thomson, and surlily admitted that 'the man could paint.'

In 1813 Thomson married for the second time, under somewhat romantic circumstances. The wealthy widow of Mr Dalrymple, of Fordel, a handsome and accomplished lady, well-known in Edinburgh society, was greatly struck by a painting of the Falls of Foyers, exhibited in the window of a picture-dealer. On asking the artist's name, she learned that it was John Thomson, the minister of Duddingston. She was no mean artist herself, and the poetic feeling in the picture appealed to her so strongly that she longed to know the man who could throw such a subtle beauty into his painting. Soon afterwards she was introduced to the minister. Each was instantly attracted to the other. John Thomson confessed afterwards that the moment he set eyes on

Mrs Dalrymple, he said to himself, 'That woman must be my wife;' and she used to tell her friends, 'We just *drew* together the first minute we met.'

Thomson was a man of attractive personality—a big, stalwart, upstanding man, jovial, rosy-faced, good-tempered. A capital host, too. Jolly suppers we may be sure those were at the manse on winter evenings, after the curling matches on Duddingston Loch. For the artist-minister was a keen lover of the 'roaring game;' and it was his delight to ask his brother curlers up to the manse when the sports of the day were over, and enjoy with them a merry evening, 'within the limits of becoming mirth.' Not the least charm of these convivial evenings was what Walter Scott called 'Thomson's delightful flute,' and even more delightful violin.

So the world went well with John Thomson, until the year 1840, and then his friends noticed with alarm a sudden falling off in his health. As the months wore on he grew worse, till he was rarely strong enough to leave his room. But nothing, not even the doctor's stern injunctions, could keep him from his beloved easel, and he was putting the finishing touches to a painting of Torthorwald Castle when the brush fell from his paralysed fingers, never to be resumed. A few hours later, conscious that he was dying fast, he asked to be taken to the window, and there propped up with pillows, that he might look once more upon the setting sun. It was a glorious October sunset, and silently the dying artist watched the rich and ruddy tints die out of the western sky—then sank back with a sigh; and before that sun rose again in its splendour John Thomson was dead.

To the end of his life Thomson never claimed to be more than an amateur; but it was no amateur's hand that painted 'Tantallon Castle,' 'The Martyrs' Tomb,' and 'The Bog of Loch-na-Kell, Galloway' (familiar to all readers of Mr S. R. Crockett's romances), 'Ravenshough Castle,' 'Conway Castle,' 'On the Clyde,' 'Fast Castle,' and a hundred more fine landscapes we could name. Whatever his faults, he must at least be allowed to have been the first Scottish artist who realised on canvas the true grandeur and beauty and poetry of Scottish scenery. Defective as they no doubt often are in draughtsmanship and technique, Thomson's landscapes always impress the imagination by their bold romantic tone—their free and fearless handling of nature. Their colours, indeed, have not stood the test of time, and this is mainly due to his use of what he called 'parritch,' a foundation of flour boiled with vinegar, upon which he worked in his colours. Working so rapidly as he did, he seldom gave the 'parritch' time to thoroughly dry and harden; and though it increased the lustre and richness of the colouring at the time, its ultimate tendency has been to wofully dim and tarnish the brilliancy of the original tints. Hence, those who look now upon Thomson's often dingy and faded canvases are unable to realise the effect which they produced when they came fresh and glowing from the easel, and are apt to think him a grossly overrated painter. But he was not that. His contemporaries justly recognised in him a true, earnest, independent, loving worshipper of nature, who threw feeling and poetry into his landscapes,

which were fresh and striking departures from the stiff and soulless formality which had hitherto characterised the Scottish school of art. He was no slavish imitator of the old or new masters, and though occasionally his resemblance to Turner was remarkable, it cannot be urged that he modelled himself upon that great artist. It was no slur upon Thomson's individuality, though we admit, with Sir James Linton, that it was a high compliment to his art, that one of his pictures a few years ago should have been sold as a Turner at Christie & Manson's, and considered a fine specimen of the master at his best.

A MAN FROM THE CAPE.

By W. PETT RIDGE.

It was an eccentric picture gallery, with pictures painted by men who were young enough to know better, of sprawling ladies in green, scarlet landscapes, and blue angels. The frames formed in themselves a grim attraction to most of the visitors; the catalogue was usually preserved by suburban patrons for the purpose of frightening birds. Yet the gallery was not without attractions on a cold day when the wind cut along from the Green Park, down Piccadilly, racing another wind which was speeding madly along Pall Mall with a slight start in advance towards Waterloo Place.

'It does one good,' said Mr James Marchant, 'to come to a show like this. If I ever go out to the Cape again'—

'Which you won't,' said the young lady.

'And I feel wistful'—

'*Mal du pays*,' suggested the young lady.

'Exactly. Why, then, I shall think of this hideous collection of pictures, and I shall feel reconciled to my lot. The Cape is not all honey, but at any rate you do get Nature there. And Nature is always good.'

'I suppose these artists think she can be improved by the introduction of a little novelty.'

'I wouldn't,' said Mr James Marchant, waving his stick round the gallery, 'I wouldn't give two-pence halfpenny for the lot of them.'

'I don't suppose they would care to sell them for less.'

Mr James Marchant laughed good-temperedly, and touched her hand, which happened to be resting on her knee. It was a very pretty hand and very neatly gloved, and there was good excuse for him.

'But there is something,' he said, lowering his voice, 'something in the gallery, Ella, that I would give every penny I have in the world to possess.'

'A picture?'

'Prettier than any picture.'

'Statuary?'

'Better shaped than any statuary.'

'Not disposed of already?'

'I hope not. There is only one difficulty—I am not sure, if I were to make an offer now, that it would be accepted.'

'How shall you find out?'

He rose and adjusted his frock-coat with the manner of a man to whom for some years frock-coats had not been familiar wear. He was a tall, browned-faced man, with a good deal of earnestness in his eyes.

'I shall ask Mrs Beckett.'

'Oh!' she said. She gasped a little before she went on. 'And you—you think my step-mother will be—will be able to advise you in the matter?'

'I think she will.' They walked slowly on the thick carpet to the swing-doors. 'Besides, it's only fair to do so.'

'It seems to me,' she said, rolling up her catalogue very tightly, 'rather an old-fashioned mode of procedure.'

'There is this excuse in my case. Mrs Beckett has an idea, I am afraid, that I have brought back from the Cape untold gold. I want to make her understand that when I say I shall have to work for my living, I really mean it.'

'I am glad,' she said quietly.

'I know that you are, dear. But I suppose parents are different.'

'My parent is.'

'And if she objects, why,' he looked down upon her affectionately, 'I shall just pack you up, Ella, and run off with you.'

'Now,' she said delightedly, 'that is more old-fashioned than ever. I believe it's an idea you have learnt from the Kafirs. What a wonderful thing travel is for improving the mind!'

'I shall see you to-night?'

'I am not sure,' she said, with her little hand resting for a moment in his. 'I think the invitation is for two only.'

'I have a great mind,' said Mr James Marchant, looking down at her affectionately, 'to kiss you.'

'That is no evidence of a great mind,' she said reprovingly. 'Besides, you are in London now.'

'And don't people kiss in London?'

'They don't kiss *me*, Mr Marchant.'

'I am very glad of that.'

'And people don't talk of kissing at the doors of picture galleries.'

'I am afraid,' said James Marchant apologetically, 'that I have much to learn before I become re-civilised. The Cape makes one forget all one's manners.'

'It has not made you forget your friends,' she said.

'There was one,' he said, as he assisted her into the hansom, 'she was only a small girl'—

'Not old enough to count?'

'Of whom I thought every day of my life out there.'

There were tears in her eyes that challenged the lightness of her good-bye. The small gloved hand was pressed in the big fist of the man from the Cape for one moment, and then he gave the address to the driver.

A bright face with the tears of happiness still there looked through the glass as the hansom drove off, and Mr James Marchant strode with a glad heart away to see a business man in Bedford Street. For men who want to earn money must

force their thoughts away even from the direction of pleasant young women.

It was by great dexterity that at dinner in Duke Street Mansions that night Mr James Marchant contrived to get himself paired with the excellent Mrs Beckett. Mrs Beckett declared herself enchanted; but this was so frequent a declaration on the part of Mrs Beckett that it was held to mean something less than the phrase really meant.

'I should have thought you would have insisted, simply insisted on taking down my dear Madeleine.'

Mrs Beckett fluttered her fan at Mr Marchant in a manner that had in the early seventies been pronounced bewitching.

'I want particularly to speak to you, Mrs Beckett. I want to offer myself'—

'S-s-sh,' said Mrs Beckett mysteriously. 'Not a word. I know exactly what you are going to say. Madeleine, my dear.' She called to a tall, bony damsel just in front of them. 'You haven't shaken hands with dear Mr Marchant. How very remiss of you. The dear girl is so thoughtless; do you know, Mr Marchant, that I declare to goodness I believe she's in love.'

Miss Madeleine received this raillery with a grim smile, and shook hands with Mr Marchant. Miss Madeleine explained that her half-sister Ella had remained at home because she had some writing to do.

'Poor Ella,' said Mrs Beckett, with effusive sympathy, 'poor dear girl. I'm really dreadfully fond of her. You must give me your advice, Mr Marchant, concerning her at dinner. I feel already—forgive me for saying so—I feel already as though you were one of the family.'

Mrs Beckett gave her little cackle of self-approval and general satisfaction, and went on as they seated themselves at table.

'I have noticed it all along, do you know, and I am so delighted. Quite enchanted really. And my influence with the dear girl will make her like you. I dare say you may have thought her a little—what shall I say—cold?—but, as a matter of fact, it has only been—oh, bless my soul, thick soup, please—what is the expression? It has only been—it has only been'—

'Maidenly reserve?' suggested Marchant.

'Pre—cisely! Pre—cisely what I was trying to say. How clever of you, dear Mr Marchant. I can understand now how it was you got on so well in South Africa. And your assertion that you had come home with very little was, I could see, only a pretence to try us.—Yes, sherry, please.'

'I want to speak to you about that, Mrs Beckett. I'm afraid you don't realise what I mean when I say that I haven't brought much home with me.'

'Now, my dear Mr Marchant.'

'You must allow me, please, to tell you exactly my position. Unless I work and earn money, we shan't have'—

'Mr Marchant! This elaborate ruse is one that I have heard of before. A woman like myself doesn't live in this world for—well, a certain number of years for nothing.'

'No,' said Mr Marchant; 'it costs money, I know.'

'That is not at all what I mean. But when

you came back from the Cape a few weeks ago, and hinted that you had only a few hundreds, I could see through it at once. It was—this is a dreadfully slangy expression—too thin. But the dear girl, of course, didn't see through it, and consequently you may feel quite sure that she will love you for yourself alone. That's all you wanted, isn't it?

'That, certainly, is all that I wanted, but'—

'And, fortunately enough, to confirm my suspicions, I came across a letter addressed to a friend of mine—she didn't know that I saw it, but I managed to do so all the same—from your partner, Burchison.'

'Really?' Mr James Marchant was suddenly interested.

'And Mr Burchison said that you and he had made a pile—such an odd expression, isn't it—of twenty thousand pounds. And he said that he thought you would both stay on for a few years, but as we know you sensibly enough came home.'

Mrs Beckett looked triumphantly across at her angular daughter opposite, who was bawling information about the weather to a deaf archdeacon, and then at Marchant. She shook her head waggishly at the man from the Cape.

'Can I see that letter?' he asked sharply.

'Fortunately I have it in my pocket, but I really don't know whether I ought to show it you. You see it is private.'

'Is that why you took it, Mrs Beckett?'

'Come, come, Mr Marchant. Don't be too severe. One has to keep one's eyes open in this world.'

She found the letter with some difficulty—for the pockets in ladies' dresses are remote and difficult of access—and under ambush of his plate, Marchant read it.

'Mrs Beckett,' he said excitedly, 'you have, without knowing it, done me a very great service. Burchison declared to me that he had invested our gains, and that all the money had been lost. It seems from this letter that he has behaved shamefully, and I shall make him disgorge every penny that belongs to me. I shall go back to the Cape by the next boat.'

'This is very unsatisfactory,' declared Mrs Beckett aggrievedly. 'You can't very well get married before next Saturday.'

'The dear girl will wait,' he answered confidently.

'I'm not so sure of that,' said Mrs Beckett with some snappishness. 'Dear Madeleine is not so young as she was.'

'So I should judge. But what has she to do with the affair? Is she to be bride'smaid?'

'Madeleine has been bride'smaid often enough,' said Madeleine's mother. 'This time, providing this money affair of yours comes out right, she will be the bride.'

'Whose bride, Mrs Beckett?'

'Why, bless the man,' cried Mrs Beckett, 'yours.'

'I don't see how that can be managed with convenience. There's a law against bigamy, I believe. Besides, I only want to marry your step-daughter.'

'Ella?' cried Mrs Beckett amazedly.

'If you don't mind.'

Mrs Beckett laid down her fish knife and fork, and stared distractedly around the table at

the other guests. Finally her eyes rested on Madeleine, and she frowned so much at that young lady that Madeleine asked across the table in an audible tone if she were ill.

'Ill?' echoed Mrs Beckett tartly; 'I have uncommonly good cause to be. To think that I have taken all this trouble for the sake of poor Mr Beckett's ridiculous little daughter by his first wife. Why, she isn't worth'—

'Excuse me,' interrupted Marchant promptly; 'you will remember, please, that you are speaking of a lady who is to be my wife.'

'Bah!' said Mrs Beckett.

CONVALESCENCE.

AWAKE, sad world, for Spring has come

With song and laughter sweet,
The billowy meadows break in foam
Of flowers about her feet.

Here where I sit, alone, apart,
I hear her voice again.
The slow blood stirs about my heart
And moves in every vein.

She bids me rise and follow her,
Light foot and heart of song;
Ah! how my feeble pulses stir
That lifeless lay so long!

I come, I come, my foot is light,
My heart beats strong once more;
Sweet Spring, I follow hard thy flight
By mountain, stream, and shore.

The lark sings sweeter overhead
Than e'er before he sung,
And I, who thought that youth was fled
For ever, I am young!

Oh rapture of the bounding blood!
Oh joy of ear and eye!
My life comes like a roaring flood
When I had thought to die.

And never was the world so sweet,
And never Spring so fair,
The primrose shining at her feet,
The stars among her hair.

The bright birds hail in every tree
Her banners green unfurled,
To live is joy enough for me
In such a sunlit world.

D. J. ROBERTSON.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage stamps should accompany every manuscript.

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THE 'HONOURS OF SCOTLAND.'

AMONG the historical treasures of our country the 'Honours of Scotland' must always hold a foremost place. They are not of very great intrinsic value, but they lie there—crown, sceptre, and sword of state—in the Crown-room in Edinburgh Castle, to bear witness to the ancient glory of Scotland, and to remind us that that kingdom is not yet swallowed up and lost in her larger and richer neighbour. They are peculiarly an evidence of the separate existence of Scotland, for it is an essential provision of the Treaty of Union that they shall never be taken across the border.

For the actual articles which are now in Edinburgh Castle a great antiquity cannot be claimed. The crown worn by the early kings of Scotland was worn last by John Baliol, the king who swore fealty to Edward of England, and who is known in history as 'Toom Tabard,' because Edward despoiled him of the insignia of his royalty. That crown was taken to England by Edward, and was lost long afterwards, when the republicans of the seventeenth century destroyed everything that could remind them of kings. The circlet of gold, also, hastily made, which was placed on the brow of Robert the Bruce by the Countess of Buchan, at Scone, in 1306, was taken to England after Methven, and never found its way back. But another crown was made, we may well believe, after Bannockburn; there certainly was one when David II. succeeded his father in 1329. Whether that crown was the one now in Edinburgh Castle is matter of controversy. If the present crown was not made in the reign of James V., it was certainly re-made then. There is evidence to warrant us in holding that that king only enlarged and improved the crown which his predecessors had worn, and we may say, with some certainty, that the crown which is now in Edinburgh is in its essence the crown worn by all the Stuart kings, save the last. The sceptre and sword certainly do not date back beyond the reign of James IV. The former was

presented to that king in 1494 by Pope Alexander VI., and was melted down and remodelled by his son in 1536. The latter, which bears on its scabbard the arms of Pope Julius II., was presented by him to James IV. in 1507.

But if we may hope and hold that the Honours which still exist were used in coronation ceremony throughout the whole period of the Stuart dynasty, it is true that since that dynasty came to an end they have never been put to their proper use. The sovereigns of Great Britain are still kings or queens of Scotland; they sit when they are crowned on the old 'Stone of Destiny,' on which the ancient kings sat at Scone, and which now forms part of the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey; but since Charles II.'s coronation as king of Scotland at Scone, in 1651, the Honours of Scotland have never borne their share in the inauguration of a new reign.

On one romantic incident in their history, which occurred just after the coronation of Charles II., some further light has recently been thrown by a publication of the Scottish History Society, and the story may bear telling here. It speaks of the courage and constancy of a brave man and two brave women, who risked much and suffered much for the honour of their country, and whose names are perhaps not so well known as they deserve to be.

In 1650 the various factions in Scotland, staggered by the extreme step which the English regicides had taken, called Charles II. from his exile to sign the Covenant and to take his father's place as king of Scotland. On the first of January 1651 Charles was with all solemnity crowned at Scone, and the Honours of Scotland were used in the ceremony. But it did not suit the English Parliamentary party that the Scottish monarchy should be restored, and the coronation at Scone was speedily followed by an invasion of Scotland by Cromwell. Charles had two alternatives before him. He might remain here, and endeavour to protect his Scottish kingdom from the invader; or he might carry the war into

England, and make a bold bid for a wider sovereignty. He chose the latter course, eluded the English army, and marched for London. The sequel is well known. Cromwell hastened after him, overtook him at Worcester, and, by that 'crowning mercy,' put an end for the time to all hopes of a restoration of the monarchy.

But when the Scottish army marched southward, and left Scotland very much at Cromwell's mercy, it was felt that something should be done to save the Honours from falling into republican hands. Accordingly, the parliament, which was then sitting at Perth, ordered them to be handed over to the Earl Marischal, who was their hereditary keeper during the sitting of parliament, and instructed him to deposit them in Dunnottar Castle, 'thair to be keepit by him till farther ordouris.'

Dunnottar Castle, an ancient stronghold of the Keith family, stands upon a steep rock which juts into the sea a mile and a half south of Stonehaven. On three sides the rock descends sheer into the sea, and on the landward side a deep though dry chasm separates the fortress from the land. In days when modern artillery was unknown the castle must have been well-nigh impregnable, and in the days of Charles II. it was a place of great strength.

To Dunnottar Castle, then, the Earl Marischal took the Honours, and concealed them there in a secret place. The command of the castle he gave to George Ogilvie of Barras, a man who had been brought up with him, and in whom he placed confidence. Forty soldiers and two sergeants were the garrison allowed him by parliament to protect his charge.

Meanwhile, events moved on. Cromwell had followed Charles to England, but English troops remained in Scotland. On the 28th of August the 'Raid of Eliot' took place—Colonel Alured and a party of horse from Dundee making a sudden dash upon Alyth, and there surprising and taking prisoner almost the entire Committee of Estates. Among the prisoners was the Earl Marischal, who, under pretence of sending for money, sent a message to his mother, apprising her of the hiding-place of the Honours, and asking her to take measures to insure their safety. Upon receipt of her son's message, the countess went to Dunnottar, but found that the English were too near to enable her to remove the Honours with safety. She accordingly took them from their hiding-place and gave them to Ogilvie, to be held by him, with the castle, for the king.

From that time till May 1652 Ogilvie held the castle against the besieging army. Worcester was fought; Charles was again a fugitive and an exile: his cause seemed lost, and one after another the posts held for him in Scotland were surrendered, but of these Dunnottar was the last. On the 24th of May 1652 Ogilvie capitulated. His garrison was too small, and was exhausted and nearly famished; an expedition planned in Holland to relieve him had never started; and he had treachery, as well as fatigue and hunger, to contend with within his walls. He surrendered the castle upon honourable terms, and was permitted to march out with drum beating and match lighted, for the space of a mile from the castle. The articles of capitulation provided that the Honours should be given up, or a reason-

able account of them given. But when the English took possession of the castle the Honours were not to be found.

Ogilvie had foreseen that he could not hold out much longer, and he had taken counsel with his wife as to how the Honours might be preserved from the hands of the English. Mrs Ogilvie had made and carried out a plan for their safety, and had purposely kept her husband in ignorance of its details, so that he might be able to say that he did not know what had become of them. She managed to convey a message to her friend, Mrs Granger, the wife of the minister of the neighbouring parish of Kinneff. Mrs Granger started one morning in March for Stonehaven with her maid, and returned, laden with various provisions for the manse, including some bundles of flax which were carried by the maid. On her way home she passed Dunnottar, and it occurred to her that she would like to pay a visit to her friend Mrs Ogilvie. The requisite permission was obtained from the English officer in command, and Mrs Granger entered the castle. Her time there was spent in a way of which the English officer would not have approved had he known of it. He was very civil to her when she came out, helped her to mount her horse, and conducted her safely through the lines. His courtesy must have been embarrassing, for she had, so tradition avers, the crown in her lap, while the sceptre and sword were in the bundle of flax on the maid's back. But her courage did not fail her, and she carried the Honours in safety to the manse at Kinneff, where she delivered them over to her husband. He hid them first in the bottom of a bed at the manse, and then secretly buried them under the pavement of the church, where they lay for eight years, visited occasionally at night by the minister, who renewed their wrappings to protect them from harm.

The removal of the Honours took place two months before the surrender of the castle. When the English found that one great object of the siege had been missed, they subjected the governor and his wife to a very strict examination. Their story, however, was explicit, if not true. John Keith, the youngest brother of the Earl Marischal, had been with them in Dunnottar when the siege began, and some time during the winter he had escaped to France, and had taken the Honours with him. A letter purporting to be from him from France, giving an account of his delivery of the Honours to the king, had been written by Mrs Ogilvie, and was allowed by her to fall into the hands of the English. But the English were not satisfied, and for some seven months Ogilvie and his wife were kept in prison and harshly treated. Their oppressors went so far as to threaten to torture Ogilvie's son in the presence of his parents, but fortunately the boy escaped their hands. At last a letter came from Paris from John Keith, who had been apprised of the state of affairs, in which he took credit to himself for carrying off the Honours. The Ogilvies were then released on bail, but Mrs Ogilvie never recovered from the treatment she had received, and died during the following summer. It was only on her death-bed that she confided to her husband the secret of the hiding-place of the Honours.

John Keith came back to Scotland at the beginning of 1654, and joined Middleton's forces

in the Highlands. Middleton's attempt to recover Scotland was not successful, and on the 26th July he was defeated at Loch Garry in Athole. The part which Keith claimed to have played in the preservation of the Honours militated against him, and it was not without great difficulty that he got himself included in the capitulation which followed.

At the Restoration, in 1660, Charles was told of the safety of the Honours, and at his command they were delivered by Granger and Ogilvie to the Earl Marischal, to whose charge they had originally been committed by the Scottish parliament. The king was not ungrateful for the service done him, and honours and rewards were distributed amongst those who had had a share in the work. Perhaps it is true that the rewards were not fairly given, and that those who had the greater influence obtained the greater share. There was an unseemly quarrel about it between Keith and Ogilvie, which lasted on into the next century, and ended in a lawsuit before the Privy Council. But into this it is not necessary to enter here. John Keith was first made Knight Marischal of Scotland, and then Earl of Kintore, and received a yearly pension of £400. George Ogilvie was made a baronet, and was given an augmented blazon of arms, along with the promise of a pension when the king's revenues should be settled—a promise which was never fulfilled. Mrs Granger received from the Scottish parliament a grant of two thousand merks Scots. To some people it would not seem unfair to say that the rewards were given in the inverse ratio to the merits of the recipients.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER IX.—AN ANONYMOUS LETTER.

It is comparatively easy to read a character from a face. This is always a scientific possibility. To fit the face to a given character is obviously the reverse. And those who knew the worst of Lady Caroline Sellwood, before making her acquaintance, received, on that occasion, something like a shock. They had nourished visions of a tall and stately figure with a hook-nose and an exquisitely supercilious smile; whereas her Ladyship was decidedly short, and extremely stout, with as plebeian a snub-nose and as broad a grin as any in her own back-kitchen. Instead of the conventionally frigid leader of society, she was a warm-hearted woman where her own interests were not concerned; where they were, she was just what expedience made her, and her heart then took its temperature from her head, like the excellent servant it had always been. A case very much in point is that of her relations with Claude Lafont, whom, however, Lady Caroline had now her own reasons for fearing no more. As for the Duke of St Osmund's, her heart had been a perfect oven to him from the first.

Nor did she make any bones about the matter—it was this that so repelled Olivia. But the very falsity of the woman was frank to the verge of a

virtue; and the honest dishonesty of her front hair (which was of the same shade as Olivia's, only much more elaborately curled) was as bluntly emblematic as a pirate's flag. Lady Caroline Sellwood was honestly dishonest to the last ounce of her two hundredweight of avoirdupois.

This was the kind of thing she thought nothing of doing. She had been engaged for months upon an egregious smoking-cap for Claude Lafont. That is to say, she had from time to time put in a few golden stitches, in front of Claude, which her maid had been obliged to pick out and put in again behind the scenes. Claude, at any rate, always understood that the cap was for him—until one evening here in the conservatory, when he saw Lady Caroline coolly trying it on the Duke.

'It never did fit you, Claude,' she explained serenely. 'It was always too small, and I must make you another. Only see how it fits the dear Duke!'

The dear Duke was made the recipient of many another mark of unblushing favour. He could do no wrong. His every solecism of act or word—and they still cropped up at times—was simply 'sweet' in the eyes of Lady Caroline Sellwood, and she never hesitated to say so.

Moreover, she would speak her mind to him on every conceivable topic, and this with a freedom often embarrassing for Jack; as, for example, on the first Sunday after church.

'I simply don't know how Francis dared!' Lady Caroline exclaimed, as she took Jack's arm on the sunlit terrace. 'Twenty-one minutes by my watch—and such drivel! It didn't seem so to you? Ah, you're so sweet! But twenty-one minutes was a perfect outrage, and I shall tell the little idiot exactly what I think of him.'

'I rather like him,' said Jack, who put it thus mildly out of pure politeness to his companion; 'and I rather liked what he said.'

'Oh, he's no worse than the rest of them,' rejoined Lady Caroline. 'Of course I swear by the sweet Established Church; but the parsons personally, with very few exceptions, I never could endure. Still, it's useful to have one in the family; he does everything for us. He christens the grandchildren, and he'll bury the lot of us if he's spared, to say nothing of marrying poor Olivia when her time comes. Ah well, let's hope that won't be yet! She is my ewe lamb. And all men are not such dear sweet fellows as you!'

This sort of speech he found unanswerable; and although treated by her Ladyship with unflagging consideration, amounting almost to devotion, Jack was never at his ease in such interviews.

One of these took place in the hut. Lady Caroline insisted on seeing it, accompanied by Olivia. Of course the whole idea charmed her to ecstasies; it was so original; it showed such a simple heart; and the hut itself was as 'sweet' as everything else connected with the Duke. So was the panikin of tea which Jack was entreated to brew for her in the 'billy': indeed, this was too sweet for Lady Caroline, who emptied most of hers upon the earth behind her camp-stool; an act which Jack

pretended not to detect, and did not in the least resent. On the contrary, he put a characteristic construction upon the incident, which he attributed exclusively to Lady Caroline's delicate reluctance to hurt his feelings by expressing her real opinion of the tea; for though personally oppressed by her persistent kindness, he was much too unsophisticated, and had perhaps too good a heart of his own, ever to suspect an underlying motive.

Towards the end of that week, in fact on the Friday afternoon, they were all taking tea on the terrace; or rather all but the two talented young men, who were understood never to touch it, and who, indeed, were somewhat out of their element at the Towers, except late at night, when the ladies had gone to bed. 'I can't think why you asked them down,' said Lady Caroline to Claude. 'I didn't,' was the reply; 'it was you, Jack.' 'Of course it was me,' cried the astonished Jack, 'and why not? Didn't they use to go to your rooms, old man, and to your house, Lady Caroline?' 'Ah,' said her Ladyship, with her indulgent smile, 'but that was rather a different thing—you dear, kind fellow!' All this, however, was not on the Friday afternoon, when Lady Caroline was absorbed in very different thoughts. They were not of the conversation, although she put in her word here and there; the subject, that of the Nottingham murder, being one of peculiar interest. The horrible case in question, which had filled the papers all that week, had ended the previous day in an inevitable conviction. And even Claude was moved to the expression of a strong opinion as he put down the *Times*.

'I must say that I agree with the judge,' he remarked with a shudder. "'Unparalleled barbarity" is the only word for it! What on earth, though, was there to become "almost inaudible with emotion" about in passing sentence? If I could see any man hanged with equanimity, or indeed at all, I confess it would be this loathly wretch.'

'Claude,' said Lady Caroline, 'I'm ashamed of you. He is an innocent man. He shall not die.'

'Who's to prevent it?' asked Jack.

'I am,' replied Lady Caroline calmly.

'There'll probably be a petition, you see,' explained Claude. 'Then the Home Secretary decides.'

'And I decide the Home Secretary,' said Lady Caroline Sellwood.

It was grossly untrue; and Olivia shook her head in answer to the Duke's astounded stare; but her mother's eyes were again fixed thoughtfully on lawn and lake. The short dry grass was overrun with wild thyme; innumerable butterflies played close to it, like spray, and the air hummed with many bees, also in love with the aroma, whose fragrance reached even to the terrace. But Lady Caroline noted none of these things, nor yet the shadows of spire and turret encroaching on the lawn—nor yet the sunlight strong as ever on the lake beyond. She was already pondering on the best way of bringing a certain matter to a head. This quiet country life, with so tiny a house-party, and with one day so like another, was excellent so far as it went, but the chances were that it would not go the whole way. It lacked excitement and incentive. It was the kind of life in which an attachment

might too easily stagnate in mere foolish friendship. It needed an event; a something to prepare for, to look forward to; a something to tighten the nerves and slacken the tongue; and yet nothing that should give the Duke an opportunity of appearing at a public disadvantage.

So this was the difficulty. It disqualified the dance, the dinner-party, even the entertaining of the county from 3.30 to 6.30 in the grounds. But Lady Caroline overcame it, as she overcame most difficulties, by the patient application of her ingenious mind. And her outward scheme was presently unfolded in the fewest and apparently the most spontaneous words.

'He is not guilty, and he shall not die,' she suddenly observed, as though the Nottingham murder had all this time monopolised her thoughts. 'But let us speak of something else; I had, indeed, a very different matter upon my mind, until the papers came and banished everything with this ghastly business. The fact is, my dear Duke, that you should really do something to entertain your tenantry, and possibly a few neighbours also, before they begin to talk. They will expect it sooner or later, and in these things it is always better to take time by the forelock. Mind, I don't mean an elaborate matter at all—except from *their* point of view. I would just give them the run of the place for the afternoon, and feed the multitude later on. Francis, don't look shocked! I hope you'll be there to ask a blessing. Then, Duke, you would have a band on the lawn, and fireworks, and indeed anything you like. It's always good policy to do the civil to one's tenantry, though no doubt a bore; but you needn't shake hands with them, you know, and you could leaven the lower orders with a few parsons and their wives from the surrounding rectories. It's only a suggestion, of course, and that from one who has really no right to put in her oar at all; still I know you won't misunderstand it—coming from *me*.'

He did not; his face had long been alight and aglow with the red-heat of his enthusiasm; and now his words leapt forth like flames.

'The very ticket!' he cried, starting to his feet. 'A general muster of all sorts, and we'll do 'em real well. Fizz and fireworks! A dance on the lawn! And I'll make 'em a speech to wind up with!'

'That would be beautiful,' said Lady Caroline with an inward shudder. 'What a dear fellow you are, to be sure, to take up my poor little suggestion like this!'

'Take it up,' cried Jack, 'I should think I would take it up! It'll be the best sport out. Lady Caroline, you're one in two or three! I'm truly thankful for the tip. Here's my hand on it!'

His hand was pressed without delay.

'It really is an excellent suggestion,' said Claude Lafont, in his deliberate way, after mature consideration. 'It only remains to settle the date.'

'And the brand of fizz, old man, and the sort of fireworks! I'll leave all that to you. And the date, too; any day will do me; the sooner the better.'

'Well,' said Lady Caroline, as though it had only just struck her, 'Olivia's birthday is the twentieth'—

'Mamma!' cried that young lady, with real indignation.

'And it's her twenty-first birthday,' pursued the other, 'and she is my ewe lamb. I must confess I should like to honour that occasion'—

'So should I. By all manner o' means!' broke in the Duke. 'Now, Miss Sellwood, it's no use your saying one word; this thing's a fixture for the twentieth as ever is.'

The girl was furious. The inevitable, nay, the intentional linking of her name with that of the Duke of St Osmund's, entailed by the arrangement now mooted, if not made, galled her pride to the quick. And yet it was but one more twang of the catapult that was daily and almost hourly throwing her at his head; neither was it his fault any more than hers; so she made shift to thank him, as kindly as she could at the moment, for the compliment he was so ready to pay her—at her mother's suggestion.

'You could hardly get out of it, however, after what was said,' she added, not perhaps inexcusably in the circumstances.

'No more can you,' retorted the Duke. 'And here comes the very man we must all consult,' he added, as the agent appeared, a taking figure in his wrinkled riding breeches, and with his spurs trailing on the dead-smooth flags.

The agent handed Jack a soiled note, and then sat down to talk to the ladies. This he did at all times excellently, having assurance and a certain well-bred familiarity of manner, which, as the saying is, went down. In this respect he was a contrast to all the other men present. He inquired when the Home Secretary would be back and ready for his revenge on the links. And he heard of the plans for the twentieth with interest and a somewhat gratuitous approval. Meanwhile the Duke had read his note more than once, and now he looked up.

'Where did you get this?' he asked, displaying the crumpled envelope, which had also a hole through the middle.

'In rather a rum place,' replied the agent. 'It was nailed to a tree just outside the north gates.'

'Well, see here,' said Jack, who stood facing the party, with his back to the stone bulwark of the terrace, and a hard look on his face; 'that's just the sort of place where I should have expected you to find it, for it's an anonymous letter that some fellows might keep to themselves—but not me! I'm for getting to the bottom of things, whether they're nice or whether they're nasty. Listen to this: "To the DUKE of St Osmund's" (He prints "Duke" in big letters, as much as to say I'm not one.), "A word in your GRACE'S ear" (He prints that the same). "They say," he says, "that you hail from Australia. And I say you're not the first claimant to titles and estates that has sprung from there. Take a friendly tip, and put on as few frills as possible till you're quite sure you are not going to be bowled out for a second Tichborne—A WELL-WISHER." Now what does it mean? Is it simple cheek, or isn't it? I recollect all about Tichborne. I recollect seeing him in Wagga when I was a lad, and we took a great interest in his case up the bush; but why am I like him? Where does the likeness come in? I've heard fat men called second Tichbornes, but I don't hardly turn twelve stone.

Then what can he mean? Does he mean I'm not a Duke? I know I'm not fit to be one; but that's another matter; and if it comes to that, I never claimed to be one either; it was Claude here who yarded me up into this pen! Then what's it all about? Can any gentleman or lady help me? I'll pass the letter round, and I'll be mightily obliged if they can!'

They could: it was pure insolence, not to be taken seriously for a single moment. So they all said with one consent; and Jack was further advised to steel himself forthwith against anonymous letters, of which persons in his station received hundreds every year. The agent added that he believed he knew who had written this one; at least he had his suspicions.

In a word, the affair was treated by all in the very common-sense light of a mere idle insult; any serious sympathy that was evinced being due entirely to the fact that Jack himself seemed to take it rather to heart. Lady Caroline Sellwood dismissed the matter with the fewest words of all; nevertheless, Jack detected her in a curious, penetrating, speculative scrutiny of himself, which he could not fathom at the time; and her Ladyship had a word to say to Claude Lafont after obtaining his arm as far as the house.

'That sort of thing is never pleasant,' she observed confidentially, 'and I can't help wishing the dear fellow had kept his letter to himself. It gives one such disagreeable ideas! I am the last person to be influenced by such pieces of impudence, as a general rule; still I could not help thinking what a very awkward thing it would be if your Mr Cripps had made a big mistake after all! Not awkward from every point of view, dear Claude'—and here she pressed his arm—'but—but of course he had every substantial proof?'

'Of course,' said Claude. 'I looked into it, as a matter of form, on Cripps's return: though his word was really quite sufficient. Well, he had copies of the certificate of Jack's birth, and of that of my uncle's marriage, besides proof positive that Jack was Jack. And that was good enough for me.'

'And for me too,' said Lady Caroline, dropping his arm. 'He is a dear fellow; I hardly know which is greater, my regard for him or my sympathy with you!' And her Ladyship marched up-stairs.

Meantime the agent had led Jack aside on the terrace.

'I know who sent that letter,' said he. 'I had my suspicions all along, and I recognised the disguised hand in a moment. It was Matthew Hunt.'

'Well?' said Jack.

'Well, it was meant merely as an annoyance: a petty revenge for the handsome thrashing you gave the fellow six weeks ago—I wish I'd seen it! But that's not the point; the point is that I think I could bring it home to the brute; and I want you to let me try.'

'I can't. What's the good? Leave bad alone; we should only make it worse.'

'Then mayn't I raise the rent of the Lower Farm?'

'No; not yet, at any rate. I mean to give the fellow a chance.'

'And an invitation for the twentieth too?'

'Certainly ; he's a tenant, or his father is ; we can't possibly leave them out.'

'Very well ; you know best.'

And the agent went his way.

THE 'CURE' AT CARLSBAD.

FOR various reasons, chiefly of health and fashion, a sojourn for a longer or shorter period at one or other of the numerous Continental spas has become almost part of the annual routine of life of the monied classes. How often have we read in our newspapers during the past season that the Prince of W., or the Duke of Midland, or the Countess of Blankshire, or Mr and Mrs Midas have gone to 'Waterbad,' or some other 'Bad,' to take the waters, or the 'cure' as it is called. No doubt our own home watering-places, such as Bath, Harrogate, and Strathpeffer, have claimed their share of visitors, but the Continental spas have had a far larger measure of patronage, affording as they do, a more radical change of life and of surroundings ; and among the oldest and most famous of these, from a medicinal point of view, must be ranked Carlsbad, although not so much frequented by English people as Homburg, Aix-les-Bains, and some others which seem to attract our countrymen. The aggregate number of persons of all nationalities taking the annual cure at Carlsbad is greater than at any other spa, reaching, during each of last season and this, the large number of about forty-two thousand, of whom one thousand were English, and two thousand American.

Beautifully situated in the valley of the clear-flowing river Tepl, just where it flows out of the hills forming a spur of the Erzgebirge ('Ore Mountains') in the north-west of Bohemia, Carlsbad, which stands over twelve thousand feet above sea level, has a special advantage which one would suppose ought to recommend it to the inhabitant of cool climates. It is seldom too hot, the mean temperature during the season being about 57° Fahrenheit, and even when it does become close in the town itself, which lies along the valley, one has only to ascend to the pine-clad hills lying all around to find shade and fresh-blowing breezes. Seventy miles of walks through the woods offer numerous diverging routes to the pedestrian, and afford here and there vistas of scenery that remind one very much of similar views in our own Highlands, wanting, however, in the attraction of the purple heather. The place takes its name from the Emperor Charles IV. of Germany, but it seems to have been known so far back as the twelfth century, though it is indebted to Charles for the commencement of its reputation as a watering-place.

The regular season extends from 1st May to 1st October, but the crowded months are July and August, and then most of the good hotel and lodging house accommodation is full, the weekly charge for a fairly good bedroom in one of the best hotels running to from thirty to fifty gulden (£2, 10s. to £4, 3s. 4d.), exclusive of light and attendance. In addition to this, each visitor remaining more than a week is charged a municipal tax called 'Kurtax,' and a music tax, amounting together to from six to fifteen gulden, depending on the visitor's rank in life. This tax is

exigible only once, however long the visitor remains, and the payment admits to the springs and concerts free, though to some special concerts a charge for admission is made. Including the journey of twenty-six hours from England by express train, cost of living, amusements, and doctor's bill, the expense of a three to four weeks' stay may be estimated at not much under £50 ; so of course persons of moderate means, unless upon strong recommendation of the physician, will not lightly incur the cost of a sojourn, though most people who have been there say it is well worth the money.

To enumerate the various diseases and derangements for which Carlsbad's waters are a remedy is rather beyond the scope of this article ; but it may at once be said that persons with organic disease, as distinguished from functional derangement, are seldom sent to Carlsbad except in cases where the organic lesion is slight. The waters are of course not a panacea for all the ills that flesh is heir to, nor can they, like many a patent pill, cure every disease from premature baldness to a sprained ankle. But as a remedy for many disorders they are *facile princeps*. For all the consequences of high living and want of exercise, such as stomach and liver troubles, gout in its various forms, and many other kindred complaints, Carlsbad waters, together with the regimen prescribed for each special case, act in general like a charm, though it may be that just at the time the patient may not feel much or any benefit, and it may be some weeks or even months before the good results of which he went in search ensue.

Now, be it understood, people do not go to Carlsbad to play themselves, though of course amusement is and must always be incidental to life at every watering-place. They go for the cure, and though no doubt there is no compulsion, still seldom indeed can anybody be seen transgressing the well-known rules of health enjoined during the stay.

Arrived at Carlsbad, the visitor or 'Kurgast,' as he is called, will, if an Englishman, doubtless elect to take up his abode in one of the fine hotels or lodging-houses on the Schlossberg, a hill immediately above the Springs, along the front of which lies the densest portion of the town. The buildings on this hill being for the most part new, are replete with every comfort ; and as they are elevated some two hundred feet above the rest of the town, it is cooler, and the air fresher and more bracing. Having fixed on his quarters, he will now seek out the physician to whom he has been recommended by his own doctor, or whom he may select from the numerous list he will find hung up in the house he is to stay at. As may be fancied from the number of patients, the body of physicians practising in the town is large and increasing, numbering at present over a hundred ; but with some exceptions, physicians are only in residence for the season, leaving with the last of the visitors when the town narrows down to its resident population of thirteen thousand and most of the large hotels and houses are practically shut up. Many of the physicians speak five or six languages, so a knowledge of German is quite unnecessary to enable the 'Kurgast' to describe his symptoms. After which, and a careful examination, he will be told what springs to drink from, and in what quantities,

what baths he is to take, and what regimen he must adopt.

At most Continental spas the methods of treatment have varied from time to time, and Carlsbad is no exception to the rule. The history of the 'Kur,' or course of waters and baths, may be divided into several more or less distinct periods. During the earliest, until about the middle of last century, excessive bathing was the rule, and patients remained in the bath until the skin became actually sore, and the term 'Hautfresskur' ('flaying cure') was derived from this barbarous method; gradually, however, this was modified, and eventually it went for a time entirely out of date, and its place was taken by a mania for absorbing enormous quantities of the waters internally, patients swallowing thirty to forty glasses a day. When one considers that this means three hundred to four hundred ounces, and that thirty to forty is quite a large allowance of liquids for an adult to consume in twenty-four hours, it is evident that the livelong day must have been spent glass in hand, and even then the wonder is that patients managed to consume the enormous dose and survive. The third or rational treatment, which is a combination of judicious drinking and bathing, set in about the end of last century, and is still in vogue.

The main basin of Carlsbad waters is estimated to be about eight thousand feet below the earth's surface, and as at that depth the temperature is high, all the springs are more or less hot, ranging from the 'Sprudel,' with a temperature of 162.5° Fahrenheit, down to 'Spital-brunnen,' with a temperature of 95.3°. There are nearly twenty different springs, but the best known and most frequented are 'Sprudel,' 'Schlossbrunn,' 'Mühlbrunn,' 'Neubrunn,' 'Felsenquelle,' and 'Marktbrunn.' The chemical analysis has remained unchanged ever since analyses began to be made, and strange as it may appear, in view of the fact that the different springs have somewhat different effects, the analysis of all is very much the same, the chief difference consisting in the different degrees of temperature. It may be, of course, that there are subtle differences existing in nature's chemistry, but not yielding their secrets to the tests of modern science. The chief ingredients are sulphates of soda and potash, chloride of sodium, carbonate of soda, and carbonic acid, but there are many others in smaller quantities. The waters are all pleasant to taste, but not two of them taste exactly alike, though the analyses are so similar, the pleasantest being the 'Schlossbrunn.' None of them ever produce nausea, and none of them has any smell more than ordinary hot water has. All the springs are led into pipes, some of which pour out their contents at surface level, others at some depth below the surface at the bottom of a kind of well, with steps descending to the bottom, and the 'Sprudel' with its upright pipe of three or four inches diameter spurting its contents in steaming, intermittent jets, ten or twelve feet into the air.

The action of all the waters is extremely mild, as they are not nearly so highly charged with drastic chemical constituents as some of our home waters, and the curative principle seems to be the absorption of the waters into a system as devoid as possible of nutriment, and the maintenance of

this condition for as long as possible daily, so as to permit of the retention of the waters in the system, and allow their action to be fully developed in the tissues. To carry this principle into effect means the reduction as far as possible of the quantity of nourishment to be taken while the waters are being drunk and for four or five hours afterwards; and though this means the exercise of considerable self-denial, it is founded on reason, and in the general case recommended as absolutely essential in properly carrying out the 'cure.' It at once follows that our ordinary English breakfast is 'taboo,' and that the dietary generally is prescribed on the principle of giving as little work as possible to the digestive system, and as much nourishment as can possibly be derived from the reduced quantity allowed.

In the ordinary case the patient will be instructed to begin with two glasses (twenty ounces) of water per day, gradually increasing the quantity to three, four, or sometimes five glasses, and going on from the cooler to the hotter springs, eventually reaching the hottest of all, 'Sprudel.' In many cases, however, this spring is not reached at all, and is quite unnecessary and even harmful. A typical day will be spent thus: The visitor will rise about six, Continental time, which of course corresponds to five o'clock English time, and having slung his glass over his shoulder, will stroll down to the 'Schlossbrunn' or 'Mühlbrunn' spring, where he will fall in at the end of the queue of people bent on the same errand. Woe betide the person who endeavours to save time and trouble by cutting into the line instead of going to the end—speedy ejection will be his fate. In five to fifteen minutes he will have come up to the spring, and his glass will be handed down at the one side from one attendant girl to another, be filled at the spring, and come up full at the other side, when he will stroll about and sip the contents slowly, listening perhaps the while to the band playing in the colonnade, and inwardly criticising the surrounding crowd of various nationalities.

He will not fail to notice that though probably nearly all the people he sees are patients taking the cure, there is a comparative absence of persons who show evidence of being very ill. Here and there of course may be seen the yellow hue of jaundice, or the gray, bloodless look of those suffering from disorganised nutrition, but the great majority will strike him as fairly robust, and indeed sometimes the robustness will take the shape of over repletion, to which a little simple starvation might be predicted to prove, if not grateful, at least beneficial.

The brilliant sun and the crisp morning air are quite exhilarating; but, alas! for many people this is for the first two or three days only, to be succeeded, as the waters begin to exercise their depressing alkaline effect on the system, by a dragging lassitude ever present in the mornings, which, however, generally diminishes. In twenty minutes or half an hour he will have his glass refilled, and so on till he has completed the prescribed number. Then he will set out for a walk of three quarters of an hour or an hour, having perhaps for his destination one of the cafés in the environs, the Post-hof, Kaiserpark, Jägerhaus, or Freundschaftsaal, and arrived there will have his meagre breakfast of one lightly-boiled egg, one

roll, or a couple of zwieback, or twice-baked rusks, and one cup of tea or coffee. Then after a rest he may continue his stroll through the pine woods, resting at intervals on one of the thousand and one rustic seats provided by the municipality. Before one o'clock he will probably have begun to feel the pangs of hunger, and having arrived at a 'Restauration' or returned to town, he will dine. He is always free to dine where he pleases, and the general rule is to change about a good deal, and not to patronise exclusively his hotel or lodging-house. Indeed, none of the lodging-houses profess to supply any meal except breakfast, though dinner or supper can be had in most of them by ordering in advance. Dinner is always *à la carte* and at midday, there being no late *table d'hôte* dinners, such as are in vogue at Homburg; at Carlsbad the 'cure' is first, and everything else second. Dinner will probably be recommended to consist of a plate of roast veal, lamb, or chicken, with green vegetables, and just a morsel of bread, with perhaps a little *compôte* of fruit to follow, and with or without a glass of Austrian red or white wine mixed with some of the native natural mineral aerated waters such as 'Biliner,' 'Gieshubler,' or 'Kronendorfer'—no potatoes, butter, cheese, raw fruit, spices, spirits, or indeed any of the usual auxiliaries of our dinner are permitted, these not being 'kurgenäss.' Should this be one of his bath days, and these occur from twice to four times a week, he will spend part of his forenoon in taking his bath, either a mud bath, sprudel bath, or perhaps some more fanciful form, such as a pine-needle bath. The mud bath is a hot black slimy combination of peat-moss brought from Francisbad, mixed with sprudel water into a sort of gigantic elongated mud pie, and the sprudel bath is the plain heated water from the 'Sprudel' spring. After the bath, rest in bed for an hour before dinner is recommended. Most kinds of baths can be had at the four different bathing establishments existing in the town, the finest of which, the Kaiserbad, opened in 1895, is perhaps the most perfect establishment of the kind in Europe. In it, besides the ordinary baths, may be had electric baths, massage, and Swedish medical gymnastic treatment.

Dinner over, rest will be found congenial, and the fragrant weed may be indulged in, while the daily paper is looked over for home news, or the 'Kurliste,' published daily by the municipality, is scrutinised for the names of the visitors arriving the previous day.

Then perhaps at four o'clock a concert may be fixed to take place at some of the open-air cafés, and especially if he is a family man his party will wish to attend it. One of the bands is very fine, being composed of seventy performers, and the appreciation with which its performances are received by a somewhat critical audience vouches for its perfection. While listening to the music a cup of coffee or tea and a zwieback is permitted. The concert will be over at six, and then a walk home through the pine woods as the sun is going down and the coolness of the evening has set in will be found enjoyable. Possibly, instead of a concert, a driving excursion may be made to one of the neighbouring places of interest, or simply through the pine woods. A light supper, generally a plate of cold meat with a morsel of bread, will follow about eight o'clock, and then to bed at

ten. All Carlsbad, or at least the 'Kurgast' population, goes to bed at ten, to prepare for the early start on the following morning.

While this may be taken as a sample of the treatment in the general case, of course each particular case has its own special treatment as that may be dictated by the medical adviser, and this may vary in many ways either in taking the waters, bathing, diet, or exercise.

After a course varying from three to four weeks, our visitor will generally find that though his capacity for exertion, mental and bodily, has for the time somewhat diminished, his appetite has improved, and what is more important, his digestion, if applied only upon such diet as is prescribed to be maintained for some little time afterwards, during the 'aftercure,' is also much improved. He will almost invariably find that he scales a good few pounds less than when he arrived, but he may comfort himself that his loss in *avoirduis* will, if that is consistent with good health in his individual case, be regained within a month or two. In short, in his improved all-round condition, his temperance and regularity will be amply repaid by an effectual 'cure.'

PHIL'S PARD.

CHAPTER III.—INJUNS!

AFTER a breakfast of slap-jacks and coffee, and the half-breed, Lorenzo, who had been out scouting, having reported no trace of Apaches, Phil, in order to divert the mind of the fair tenderfoot from the dangers which might overhang them, took her to look at the ruins of the old pueblo, which stood about a hundred yards from the station, across the trail by the creek; and Surly Tim accompanied them. They had roamed about the curious apartments that were still accessible on the ground-floor, and the girl was seated upon a log in one of the rooms, listening to her rough-spoken cicerone's graphic account of life in these old unique institutions, when Surly Tim gave vent to a muttered exclamation, and crept cautiously towards an aperture in the wall. Phil's eyes followed those of Tim, and Miss Annarsley's followed Phil's.

In front of the station and across the trail from it grew a thick belt of yuccas, behind which the ground was covered down to the creek with gamma grass. At first Jim's eyes saw nothing that was not there when the three left the station, but watching more closely the two men's gaze, she detected a slight movement in the grass that slowly advanced, now ceasing entirely, now creeping along stealthily for a few yards in the direction of the station until it was lost among the yuccas. Five minutes—ten minutes—a quarter of an hour passed, and still the two men watched, and the girl wondered. At length a head, a brown head with black hair, rose slowly into view so cautiously that it seemed rather to grow out of the tuft of dark sword-shaped leaves as though it were a part of the plant.

'What's that?' demanded the girl in a frightened whisper.

'Which it 'pears to me, miss, as Tim would say, drawled Phil in return, as he brought up his rifle to the sight, 'thet's an Injun.' The crack of his firearm supplied the full stop to the sentence, and was echoed by a piercing death-cry, as a half-naked bronze body in full war-paint leaped five feet in the air, and crashed to the ground a corpse.

For an instant there was silence in the old pueblo. Then, with flashing eyes, Jim Annersley turned to the philosopher, and, pointing with outstretched finger to the yuccas, fairly hurled at him the one word—

'Murderer!'

'I reckon you air c'reck thar, miss, but I calkerlate the red cuss won't murder no more. He's through with his slayin' this side the happy huntin'-grounds,' replied Phil, coolly throwing away the spent cartridge, and replacing it with a loaded one in order to keep the magazine of his repeating-rifle charged to its full capacity.

'You—you! I meant you—monster! fiend! assassin! You shot down a poor fellow-creature from behind his back!' she exclaimed passionately; and Phil stood with unmoved face as he paused to admire this new phase of her beauty, as one stops to note the heightened effect on some fair view of the Sierras under the majestic splendour of a vivid electric discharge.

'Say, miss, did yer trade in Injuns at the store at Carville?' he asked quietly.

The girl shot one glance of bitter resentment at him, and did not deign to reply in words.

'Didn't use ter measure 'em off with a yard-stick, or weigh 'em out in pounds, an' put 'em up in passels, did yer?' he went on blandly, for not even his admiration for the fresh young girl or the novelty of it had quite conquered the strong vein of sarcasm that a long course of philosophy almost invariably breeds in a man's nature.

Still Miss Annersley refused to reply.

'Jest so!' he concluded pleasantly, and shouldering his rifle, stepped across to the clump of yuccas which Surly Tim and the occupants of the station, brought out by the shot, had already reached. The girl followed, drawn by some horrible fascination, to further sicken her tender heart with her first sight of human slaughter.

'It's Arrow Nose's chief scout, Creeping Snake,' Luis cried in alarm, and returned quickly to the station. In another minute he was galloping down the trail on the fastest mustang in the corral, for was he not 'pure Mexican,' with a wholesome regard for a whole skin!

Lorenzo quickly followed, and how or when the Indian boy disappeared nobody knew. He vanished.

'Which it 'pears to me we'd better be bulgin' over to Plummer's,' remarked Surly Tim.

'You kin clap the saddles on the three best hosses you kin ketch,' Phil replied; and Tim hurried away to do his bidding, while the philosopher paused a moment, for his eye had noticed that, in falling, the body of the Indian had im-

prisoned a harmless horned toad. He rolled the corpse over with his foot, and the released lizard crawled away ungainly to safety. Then he followed Tim without a word towards the building. And the girl saw him and marvelled—marvelled that in the same lump of human flesh nature should have implanted such incongruous impulses, that the same man who only a few minutes ago shot down like vermin a fellow man should now in an hour of extreme peril display such kindness to a mere ugly reptile.

Frightened and bewildered, she followed Phil across the trail, and not knowing what to do, sat upon the bench by the door, while he strode hurriedly into the house. Soon he reappeared with something over his arm.

'Oh, why did I ever come upon this mad errand!' she cried bitterly. 'Heaven help me! what will the end of it be?'

'Either Luis's trousers or kingdom come,' replied Phil laconically.

She looked up in his face, and there read stern command. Murderer or no murderer, she felt that there was no trifling in the look of those cold gray eyes, and snatching up the garment, she fled with it to the room she had slept in. In ten minutes more she was riding down the trail with Phil at her side, while Surly Tim rode a few yards in advance.

Jim Annersley was an accomplished horse-woman, and found, when the strangeness of it had worn off, that it was not so difficult to adapt herself to the Mexican saddle as she had imagined. Action, too, calmed down her fears, and soon she was wondering how, under the circumstances, she could be so cool. And as she grew cooler and reflected, it came to her that she might possibly have been a little too precipitate in accusing her companion of the enormity of murder; yet she could not see what justification he had received. As for Phil, he trotted along at her side, with the same indifferent look his face might have exhibited if the occasion had been a picnic instead of a race for life.

'Mr Marpleson,' she began a little awkwardly; 'I want to be just to you.'

'Wal?'

'There are things I'm afraid I don't understand. Human life is such a precious thing that my soul revolts to see it taken so— I hardly know how to put it, Mr Marpleson, but doesn't your sense of justice demand that even an Indian, when he is taken unawares, should not be ruthlessly put to death without a fair trial?'

'Jest so,' replied Phil genially: 'only when it's a Injun ez is out on the warpath, layin fur to rip the shingles offen the roof of yer head, it's jest as well to shoot him fust an' try him after.'

The girl rode on in silence for some minutes, then turning to her companion suddenly, she asked:

'Mr Marpleson, why did you shoot that Indian?'

'Cos I nivver buck agen Providence—cos I'd rather be a Arizony gold-digger for two minutes'n a corpse fur all etarnity. Say, miss,' he went on, 'you air what we call a innercent, an' you don't quite ketch on. Thar's Injuns nearer'n you or me reckoned. Ef I'd let that red skunk git back to Arrow Nose, the hull lot 'ud hev

been down on us like jack-rabbits, an' I 'low we'd hev been wrastlin' our hash out on the mesa afore sun-down. Now the Apache cusses'll wait till nightfall fur their scout to come in. Then, mebbe, they'll send out another; but, anyhow, they nivver attacks in the night, an' so by the time they git the general drift of things up at Cruz, we'll be c'lar over to Plummer's—onless'—

'Unless what?'

'Onless they light on our trail by accident.'

And that is just what they did.

Thirty out of the forty miles had been traversed, and weariness was beginning to sit heavily upon the girl, for only once had they dismounted to water their horses at a 'dobe hole, and rest for a few minutes from the scorching glare in the shade of a clump of yuccas. Now they made a detour to gain the opposite side of the box-cañon of a creek which lay exactly across the direct trail from Cruz to Plummer's—a mighty chasm whose high perpendicular walls, two hundred yards apart, sternly forbade the passage of aught but a bird or a rifle bullet. The three fugitives having got round to the opposite edge of the cañon, Phil decided upon halting for an hour, and Jim flung herself thankfully upon the sun-baked earth to snatch the brief rest which was, alas, denied her; for, looking across the chasm, her eyes fell upon a tall, naked savage, grotesquely streaked with yellow and red paint, sitting motionless upon a white horse on the very lip of the cañon. The eagle feathers in his bonnet stood out clearly silhouetted against the sky. He might have been a statue—only he had not been there the minute before.

All thought of fatigue vanished instantly.

'Is that?'—Jim began.

'Arrow Nose, I reckon,' Phil returned quietly, completing the sentence.

The terrible Apache chief struck his mouth rapidly with the flat of his hand, and gave vent to a shrill, piercing, vibrating note, that shrieked and swelled across the chasm, and went echoing from side to side down the cañon. It was the war-whoop.

'What is he shouting?' asked Jim fearfully.

'Quit,' I reckon,' rejoined Phil, as he swung her into the saddle and leaped on his own mustang.

Hardly had the prolonged signal for slaughter died away, when the opposite brink of the chasm was crowned with a living fringe of yelling, mounted human fiends, and the Apaches sent a volley of bullets singing across the gorge from the Remington repeating-rifles they had stolen from the murdered cavalry command.

'Ride for yer life outen gun-shot!' cried Phil; and the mustangs sprang forward amid a hail of bullets.

When a couple of hundred yards had been placed between them and the cañon, Phil slackened speed and drew Surly Tim back.

'Tim,' he remarked, in a low tone, 'this yer circus hez begun. I reckon it will take the red cusses twenty minutes to git here. That gives us a purty good send off; but the gal's tired, an' the horses ain't fresh. Mebbe we'll make Plummer's—an' mebbe we'll make kingdom come. I want you to swar that ef we strike a streak of ill-luck an' I'm laid out previous, that ef the

wust comes to the wust, you'll clap your shootin'-iron to thet gal's head an' put a bullet through her brain afore you say yer prayers!'

'I swar, Phil,' Surly Tim replied solemnly, and the two men shook hands.

'What were you saying to Tim?' inquired Jim anxiously, as Phil came up.

'I was tellin' him of a young Eastern jay ez come to Plummer's last fall in a plug hat an' a biled shirt to git subscriptions fur the "Life of Confucius" in twenty-one sections. An' now, I reckon, we'd better be littin' out,' returned Phil, with the face of a Sphinx. And the girl knew that he lied, but said nothing.

During the last few minutes they had been taking advantage of the cover afforded by a group of bare, brown rocks, but now they galloped on to the open again, and pressed forward, for they were still within range of the Indians' rifles. As the fugitives reappeared on the mesa, another blood-curdling yell went up through the golden sunshine, and the repeating-rifles spoke again. Jim Annersley's horse answered with a scream of pain, and ploughed heavily down on the hard baked earth, shot through the heart. In a flash Phil had leaped from the saddle in time to save the girl from a heavy fall.

'Oh, what shall I do—what shall I do?' she cried helplessly, as the shots rang out again across the cañon.

'Which it 'pears to me, miss, you kin mount my burro, fur the present owner hez no further use fur it. I reckon the red cusses hev trumped my last trick!' growled Surly Tim, savagely shaking his fist at the yelling brutes, and rolled out of the saddle—dead!

Sick at heart, the girl pressed her hands to her eyes. The golden, laughing sunshine was full of cruel, bloody death. A sickening faintness came over her as a heavy cloud, that lowered and lowered, and crushed her in its icy blackness until her brain reeled—until Phil caught her round the waist and whispered encouragingly:

'You come out here to show us an Illinois gal was real grit! Show it now!'

That pulled her together better than a dram of spirits. Fear fled like the gloom on the Sierras before the morning sun, and only brave resolution shone on her pale beautiful face.

'God help me, I will!' she returned steadily, and, turning to the heap of lifeless clay that had so lately been Surly Tim, she stooped and laid her pure young lips reverently on the still warm forehead. It was the first time for many years that a kiss of fresh young innocence had been pressed there. Phil turned away—he did not know why. With uncovered head—he did not know why—he turned his face up to the blue. Perhaps it was only its blueness that reflected itself in his eyes, turning them to the tenderer shade. Perhaps it was only the strong light that drew the moisture into the corners of them. Perhaps!

And, crack! crack! the rifles rang out, for the Indians were not sparing of Uncle Sam's ammunition; but they were firing at long range now, and none of the other shots told. Silently Phil helped his fair comrade to mount Tim's mustang, and quickly vaulting into the saddle himself, the two were soon beyond reach of the firearms of the Apaches, who were now racing madly

along the brink of the cañon, a howling, blood-hungry horde, to the nearest crossing. The mad race for life or death had begun in grim earnest.

MARSH GAS.

By Dr T. L. PHIPSON.

Of the various natural gases or different kinds of air, that known as Marsh Gas is one of the most interesting and most important to mankind. Obtained artificially, it forms the greater portion of the gas we burn in our streets and houses; but in producing it for this purpose by the distillation of coal, it is accompanied by other gases which are highly deleterious to animal and vegetable life, and are dangerous to breathe, though marsh gas itself is not known to be very noxious. It is an invisible gas, like air, and only about half as heavy as the latter, so that a balloon filled with it will rise in the atmosphere. In its pure state, unaccompanied by the other gases which are mixed with it in coal gas, it is without odour or flavour, and can be inhaled to a certain extent without producing dangerous symptoms. It is only dissolved very slightly by water, differing widely in this respect from carbonic acid gas, the solutions of which are used at table as seltzer water, and which rises from champagne and other sparkling wines.

Marsh gas is a compound of carbon and hydrogen, often called carburetted hydrogen, and it derived its common name from the fact that it occurs abundantly in marshy lands, bogs, and swamps, and rises in bubbles from the muddy bottom of old ponds. If you stir up the mud of a pool, large quantities of this gas bubble up to the surface, and if you apply a light to them, they will take fire and burn with a yellowish or bluish flame according as the gas is more or less pure, for marsh gas is very inflammable. In winter, when the ponds are frozen, you may observe large bubbles of gas, or 'air-bubbles' as they are usually called, shut up in the ice here and there; and if you take a gimlet and bore into these air-bubbles, you will often find, on applying a lighted match to them, that the gas will take fire. On some large frozen ponds this inflammable gas lies just below the ice in such quantities that when a small hole is bored in the latter, and a light is applied to the orifice, the stream of gas that issues will take fire and burn for a length of time, lighting up at night all around.

In all parts of the world this peculiar gas issues thus from the marshy soil, year after year, in abundance. It is due to the decomposition or rotting of vegetable substances, leaves, mosses, grass, and the branches of trees, which lie decaying in the mud at the bottom of ponds and swamps. But it often rises from the soil in places where no such decaying vegetable matter appears to exist, and in coal mines it issues at times in prodigious quantities from the strata cut through by the miners. As its mixture with common atmospheric air gives rise to a fearful explosion the moment a light is applied, it is easy to understand what a source of danger this gas is to coal miners

who work in pits and galleries which are not sufficiently ventilated to carry off this dangerous gas as fast as it is produced and replace it by pure air. We all know that George Stephenson and Humphrey Davy discovered what is called a 'safety lamp' to avoid accidents of this kind—a sort of lantern made of a fine metallic gauze that surrounds the flame. Within this fine gauze the explosive mixture of air and marsh gas will take fire, but will not communicate sufficient heat to the gas and air outside the lamp to cause it to ignite, and thus the miner has time to escape.

But experience proves that these lamps are not entirely to be relied upon, and nothing short of perfect ventilation will ever overcome the evil. This is the more difficult, however, as the gas often comes with a sudden rush from the floor or sides of the workings. Fortunately, certain coal mines are not at all subject to this production of marsh gas, or 'fire damp,' as the miners still call it, whilst others are, on the contrary, very liable to it; and the latter require the greatest possible precautions to prevent calamitous results. These precautions form one of the great economic problems of our age, and the subject, no doubt, occupies the thoughts of many ingenious men at the present time. Similar danger is incurred by entering, with a light, any room of a house in which there exists an escape of gas.

Marsh gas was discovered by Charles Joseph Campi, an Italian ecclesiastic, and a friend of the great electrician Volta. It was in the autumn of 1767 that the reverend gentleman, in taking a stroll along the banks of the Lambro, near the beautiful hills of St Columbano, in Lombardy, observed, for the first time, that when he thrust his walking-stick into the mud abounding in vegetable remains which lies under stagnant water, bubbles of gas escape which are inflammable. He communicated this remarkable discovery to his friend Alexander Volta, already celebrated in the scientific world, who wrote him a number of most interesting letters about it, which were afterwards published in French, at Strasburg, in 1778. But it appears that Benjamin Franklin heard of the existence of this gas in New Jersey as early as 1764, or three years previously to Campi's discovery, as he states in a letter to Dr Priestley of Birmingham.

Marsh gas is known to be a product of volcanoes, and it issues from the earth in many volcanic regions. In some parts of the world it may be seen burning, forming natural springs of fire, several of which, in the East and elsewhere, have been burning for a very long period of years. But some of these fire-springs are known to be due to naphtha or petroleum vapour, for they diffuse a certain odour and produce much smoke, whereas the flame of marsh gas gives no smoke and no odour. As long ago as the time of Campi and Volta, that is, during the latter part of the last century, marsh gas was supposed to be the prime cause of that curious phenomenon known as the *ignis fatuus*, or Will-o'-the-Wisp, the flickering light of which is seen dancing over marshy lands and swamps, chiefly at the latter end of autumn. There can be little doubt that such

is really the cause of this singular appearance which, on dark November nights, has struck with amazement many a wayfarer in the boggy districts of Northern Britain. But the difficulty which the celebrated Volta could not solve was to explain how the gas, which oozes from the boggy land, got lighted. This is a complicated question which we have not space to examine fully here; but we may state briefly that the fact appears to be due to the decomposition of certain animal substances, the bodies of dogs or cattle, for instance, along with that of the vegetable remains in the mud. This gives rise to a gas called phosphuretted hydrogen, which has a most nauseous odour, and takes fire the moment it comes in contact with the air, thus setting the marsh gas alight as it bubbles up to the surface of the swamp. Although this has not yet been proved by actual experiment, it is the only manner in which the remarkable phenomenon can be explained at all satisfactorily in the present state of science. A more practical problem is how to account for, and prevent, the disastrous explosions which occur from time to time in coal mines. An accidental escape of inflammable gas in our houses is easily remedied: and when it occurs, the chief precaution is to open all the doors and windows for some time before entering any room with a light. But in gaseous coal mines marsh gas is a constant source of danger; its sudden emission from the seams of coal after a period of high barometer readings, when the glass begins to fall, often takes us by surprise, and hitherto no chemical nor mechanical means have been discovered that can effectually avert the danger.

Chlorine gas, which is evolved from chloride of lime, or bleaching powder, is one of the few substances which are, as yet, known to act upon marsh gas and destroy it; and a liberal application of chloride of lime in coal pits might, perhaps, have some beneficial results. Again, the 'safety lamp' could not prevent an explosion caused by *ignis fatuus*, or by the heating of pyrites by oxidation; and as regards the former of these two causes, the carcasses of dead dogs and other animal substances are by no means uncommon in the galleries of coal mines.

But the greatest source of danger appears to be the sudden rushes of gas which occasionally occur, and which the most efficient ventilation hitherto practised is often insufficient to counteract.

THE EUREKA STOCKADE.

By A. B. S., Melbourne.

THERE are few places in the British dominions which are so void of historical incidents as the colony of Victoria. When the white man first came there were only a few scattered tribes of degenerate savages who were quite willing to barter their territory and their independence for blankets, knives, tomahawks, &c.; and when at last it dawned upon them that they had voluntarily placed themselves under a foreign yoke, whose laws did not allow them to steal, murder, or indulge in their favourite pastime of eating one another, they were, unlike their brethren in the sister colony of New Zealand, too apathetic and

cowardly to fight, and contented themselves by murdering a few isolated settlers for the sake of the small amount of plunder that was to be obtained.

There is, however, one incident dear to the heart of Victorians, and that is the fight at the Eureka Stockade which took place in 1854. It is the nearest approach to a battle that the colony has ever seen; and although recent arrivals are apt to look upon the affair as that of a few soldiers suppressing a disorderly mob, there is not the slightest doubt that it taught the Imperial authorities a lesson; and the reforms which followed were of the greatest importance to the colonists.

What led up to the riots was the law which provided that every miner should take out a license. In 1853 the fee was two pounds, and it only lasted one month; at one time it was as much as three pounds, though afterwards reduced to thirty shillings. This was manifestly unfair; of course a miner who had a good claim out of which he was getting plenty of gold did not mind paying the fee, but many worked for months and only made a bare living. To them it was a great hardship; very often they could not find the money, and then the law prohibited them from gaining a livelihood until they begged, borrowed, or stole it. Again it was prejudicial to the interests of the colony; for before gold was discovered things were in a very bad state, and people who came to Victoria could get little or nothing to do, and were only too glad to get away again provided they had the means to do so. The gold changed all this, and through it thousands of able-bodied men arrived from all parts of the world.

To add to the injustice, the mode of seeing that the miners complied with the law was carried out in a most objectionable manner. At least once, and sometimes twice a week, the police made raids on the fields, and as Clause I. of the license directed that it should be carried on the person, and produced whenever demanded by the commissioner, peace officer, or any other duly authorised person, it gave the police, who were in many cases a rough lot, an opportunity of exercising their power according to their own sweet will; consequently the demand was mostly made in a peremptory and overbearing manner. If the unfortunate miner had not taken out a license, or had left it at home, he was forthwith handcuffed and marched away to the lockup, or 'logs' as it was called, from the fact that the prisoners were often chained to logs to prevent their escape from this not over-secure prison. They received scant justice from the authorities, and were heavily fined. Whenever the police appeared amongst the diggers, the cry of 'Joe, Joe,' resounded on all sides. The import was well understood, and the diggers disappeared down the shafts and into any available hiding-place, like rabbits into their burrows. Nor were the miners the only persons subject to this treatment; any one who looked or was clothed like a digger was liable to be served in the same way; even the cook who never handled pick or spade was expected to produce the license.

The writer knows a gentleman, who for the last forty years has held a responsible position in a leading business house in Melbourne, who was

arrested, handcuffed, and taken to the logs, because his license was illegible through his having to frequently produce it and afterwards replace it in his trousers pocket, where dust and grit got in and soiled it; the license, however, was perfectly valid at the time.

The miners had no redress, as, like the inhabitants of Johannesburg the franchise was not extended to them. There was nobody to champion their cause, and it is not a matter of surprise that this state of affairs terminated in bloodshed.

The site of the Eureka Stockade is situated two-and-a-half miles from the mining city of Ballarat, and was in those days called Bakery Hill. The ground is now covered with quartz, and in the centre of the spot where the Stockade stood there is a hillock; the citizens have built on its summit a stone platform, and on top of this a smaller platform surmounted by an obelisk; at each of the angles are obsolete sixty-pounders, mounted on gun-carriages to match; these were presented by the government, the whole being enclosed by a picket fence. The cost of erecting the monument was partly defrayed by the town council, and the balance made up by public subscription.

In 1854 there stood in Eureka Street, close to the Stockade, a large canvas tent where drinks were sold, and which was dignified by the name 'Hotel,' the proprietor being a man named Bentley. One day a scuffle took place just outside the tent, and a digger named Scobie was killed. Bentley was supposed to have caused his death, and was brought before the police-magistrate and discharged. This greatly exasperated the diggers, who held an indignation meeting and burned the tent. Three men were arrested for this, and sentenced to short terms of imprisonment; their friends, who maintained that they were innocent, sent a deputation to Melbourne for the purpose of interviewing Sir Charles Hotham, who was then governor, and demanding their release; this was refused, and the government sent reinforcements of police, also detachments of the 12th and 40th Regiments, which arrived in Ballarat on 28th November. The diggers, meanwhile, had not been idle; drilling was carried on, arms and ammunition collected, and Peter Lalor was chosen leader. He was a civil engineer, a man of great courage and ability, and the son of an ex-M.P. for Queen's County in Ireland. The other leaders were a Swiss named Verne, who was at one time a soldier in his native land; Carboni Raffaello, an Italian; Thomas Kennedy, an Englishman and an ex-Chartist; and a Canadian named Ross.

As the soldiers approached Ballarat the miners attacked them with the object of getting possession of their firearms and bayonets, but were driven back. In retaliation, the police made their last and most exasperating raid in search of licenses. This was the last straw; the miners held a meeting at which thousands attended and burned their licenses. The great majority were averse to anything approaching civil war, but the more headstrong were prepared to fight it out to the bitter end. They built a rough stockade consisting of mining slabs tied together with ropes, overturned carts, stones and earth, and hoisted their flag, a blue one with stars to represent the Southern Cross. Their pass-word was 'Vinegar Hill.'

Captain Thomas of the 40th, who was senior officer in command, seeing that a conflict was inevitable, determined to attack before the miners could increase their number and strengthen their position. Before dawn on Sunday the 3d December he marched his forces, which consisted of 276 men all told, including foot and mounted police. They marched silently towards the Stockade, and were not discovered till they were quite close, when the digger sentry fired at them. The men came rushing out of their tents, and a few volleys were fired by both sides; then the troops charged and were soon over the trifling barrier, when a hand-to-hand conflict ensued. The diggers, however, had been taken by surprise, and a large number were away on a foraging expedition, leaving only about 300 in the Stockade. The fight was over in a few minutes, but was hot while it lasted, as the death-roll showed, thirty diggers being killed, and many more wounded, including Peter Lalor, who received a bullet in his left arm, while 125 were made prisoners. On the other side, Captain Wise of the 40th was mortally wounded, Lieutenant Paul also wounded, and five soldiers killed. Two days later, Major General Sir Robert Nickle and 800 officers and men, with four field-pieces, also a number of blue-jackets from H.M.S. *Electra*, arrived in Ballarat, and martial law was proclaimed.

A reward was offered for the apprehension of the ringleaders, but no one betrayed them; Lalor was surgically treated, and had his arm amputated; after that he walked about unmolested, and actually showed himself at a government auction sale while the price was still upon his head; a few days later a *Gazette* notice appeared withdrawing the reward. The prisoners were tried on a charge of high-treason and acquitted. Bentley was brought before a properly constituted tribunal, found guilty of participating in Scobie's death, and sentenced to three years on the roads; he afterwards committed suicide in Melbourne in 1873.

Things soon resumed their normal condition, and the inhabitants of the gold-fields looked hopefully forward to the reforms which were expected to follow the report of a Gold-field Commission, which had been appointed by Sir Charles Hotham just prior to the outbreak. The commissioners visited Ballarat and other mining districts, and were well received. They found that the average miner earned less than men employed at other industries, and advocated that the fee be reduced to one pound per annum, and that the possession of a license should entitle the holder to exercise the franchise. The recommendations of the Commission were in the main adopted. The more intelligent of the miners were appointed Justices of the Peace, and arrangements were made whereby the gold-fields could send representatives to parliament. Since then the authorities have never had to complain of disloyalty on the part of the mining population.

Peter Lalor was returned unopposed to a seat in the Legislative Council (there was only one house at that time), and shortly afterwards was appointed Inspector of Railways. From that time till his death, which occurred eight years ago, he sat in the Legislative Assembly, at one time holding the portfolio of Minister of Customs; and during the last years of his parliamentary

career he occupied the responsible post of Speaker, in which position his great knowledge of parliamentary procedure, added to his courtesy and firmness, won for him the respect and affection of all classes of the community.

In the principal street of Ballarat there stands a statue of Peter Lalor, and a monument erected in the cemetery bears the names of the soldiers and diggers who fell on that tragic Sunday.

THE WOOL-WEAVERS OF WINTERSLOW.

WITHIN sight of Salisbury spire lies their home, a village of which Sir John Gorst once wrote, 'It is one of the most intelligent villages I have visited.' This high praise was a tribute to their plan of self-government, already in full working order before the Parish Councils Bill had received the royal assent.

To the county councillor for the district, Major Poore, is due the credit of having worked out a system of local government by means of a village committee or 'council,' which, after being explained to the villagers, was promptly adopted. This institution is truly representative, the village being divided into sections of ten families with a chairman and vice-chairman to each section, the chairmen and vice-chairmen collectively forming the committee of the village, which has already inspired so much confidence that the churchwardens have handed over to it the management of the parish charities. Besides the 'council,' another interesting scheme is at work here. In 1892, through the kind assistance of Major Poore, a neighbouring farm was acquired, which has been sold to the village as small holdings, the plots varying in size from sixteen acres to a quarter of one, and the price from £30 to £8. The estate is managed by a 'landholders' court,' which settles all disputes, collects the rates, tithes, and any rents due, and considers all applications for unallotted land. This court is registered as a trading company under the title of the 'Landholders' Court, Limited, Winterslow,' its principal object being to form a common interest, which shall encourage individual effort and at the same time show an easy method of united action for mutual trade purposes. The same principle of organisation which rules the village committee rules also the landholders' court. The holders are divided into five sections, according to the lie of the land, all holders in a section forming the committee, and their chairman and vice-chairman constituting the directorate of the company.

The solicitude and capacity of these village leaders to further the material well-being of the village is clearly indicated by the following extract from their first report: 'The directors have under consideration the institution of spinning and weaving, and are encouraged to urge it as a home industry, on account of the success attending its institution in other places.' That this action of theirs was not entirely spontaneous in no way detracts from the intelligence they displayed in adopting the proposal made to them by Mrs Poore, who, after having seen for herself the excellent results accruing from Mr Albert Fleming's attempt to reinstate the once familiar wheel in the homesteads of Westmorland, where many

a thrifty house-mother can now earn, in her spare time, twenty shillings or thirty shillings a month by her flaxen thread, advised the organisation of a similar industry in Winterslow, though, in consideration of its position in a wool-producing district, wisely proposing to substitute wool for flax.

The initial difficulties of learning to spin and weave were finally surmounted by the help of Countess Hamilton and her school of weaving, from whom both arts were learned, and through whom wheels and a small hand-loom were procured from Sweden. As English joiners are again learning to construct spinning-wheels, by degrees strong English-made wheels from the workshop of Mr Lovibond of Salisbury will take the place of the more fragile foreigners. The loom itself, which, though perfectly adapted for linen-weaving, was troublesome and slow for wool, has already been successfully altered by the village carpenter under the supervision of a weaver. This man, discovered after some trouble, was induced to visit the village to weave the first yarn spun, and to instruct the members of the class to throw the shuttle and manage the treadles for themselves; and now from seven to ten yards of cloth can easily be woven in a day, where at first the production of one was a labour of difficulty.

Though only started in the winter of 1894, the Winterslow industry has already produced good work. Over three hundred yards of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth in twenty-two patterns and colours has been finished, the specimens sent to the Home Arts and Industries Association's Exhibition in June last being so admirable in texture and design that they received six awards for merit. The quality of cloth made is very suitable for shooting suits and tailor-made gowns, and has already won great praise from a leading London tailor, who is willing to use it extensively. Some of the patterns are particularly beautiful, notably a web of turquoise blue tweed, which so delighted H.R.H. the Princess of Wales that she bought the whole piece exhibited at the Albert Hall. H.R.H. was so much struck by the value of this wool-weaving as a village industry, that she has since had Mrs Poore's best spinner, Mrs Giddens, down to Sandringham to instruct the superintendent of her 'Handicrafts' School,' with a view to starting similar work among her Norfolk tenants.

In organising the classes of Winterslow, the women have wisely followed the plan which has already proved so successful among their husbands, and have divided the spinners into sections presided over by chairwomen, who themselves form the directorate of the whole Industry, keeping the accounts, taking the orders, giving out the work, teaching new pupils, &c. Each spinner, of whom there are eighteen, buys her own wheel, and if she wishes to spin and weave the cloth for her own use, she can buy it of the Industry for the price of the wool. The looms are set up in a disused club-room, and are at present the property of Mrs Poore, who lends them when required to the weavers, of whom there are three. From the surrounding neighbourhood come many applications to join the classes from girls unable for various reasons to leave home for service, who have many a

leisure hour, which might be profitably spent at a wheel if only the funds of the Industry would permit of their employment. This much to be desired end can only be achieved as the cloth becomes better known and commands a regular sale, in which effort any one interested in such work may help by ordering a suit or dress *through their own tailors*—a plan infinitely easier to themselves and kinder to the workers, who thus become known to the trade, than that of writing direct to the village for the material.

As to the value of such a Home Industry to the prosperity of a village the women of Winterslow are the best authorities. They say that spinning saves much time which would otherwise be wasted; is a restful, agreeable occupation, easily laid down when household cares demand their attention, and one of the best antidotes to the habit of gadding and gossiping, which was before responsible for so many wasted hours and peace-disturbing tales. Besides this, the endeavour to spin the best possible thread and weave the evenest web has sharpened their wits and added interest to their lives, while at the same time filling their pockets with a most valuable supplement to the husband's weekly wage. The very object of the Industry kept so steadily before them by its promoters is, to produce for sale at a price which will cover all working expenses, a cloth of the best possible texture, made by English hands in healthy country homes, and to enable the labourer to be clothed in a well-made material, which will add to his health, comfort, and efficiency, at no higher price than he now gives for the useless shoddy of the trade; and this has a high moral and educational effect upon their characters, developing in them all the latent dexterity and ingenuity they may happen to possess, and encouraging in every way their efforts at self-culture.

It is perfectly possible and most desirable to start similar industries in every village in the land. There need be no fear of over-production, as the demand, when the existence of such industries is realised, will always exceed the power of production by hand-loom; while the price asked for simple homespuns suitable for the roughest wear of men and women in country districts need never be prohibitive to those who need them most, such sums, however small, being always a most welcome addition to the income of any cottage home, where the struggle to make both ends meet must long continue an arduous one. Both spinning and weaving are extremely pleasant crafts—no small matter in days when one of the chief problems to be solved by all interested in social work is that of putting more brightness into the homes and lives of the toilers. William Morris's answer to this question is decisive. 'You cannot educate, you cannot civilise men, unless you give them a share in art.' He does not mean, set everybody to paint altar-pieces; but, into every craft let art find its way so that in his daily task the workman may feel that his own individuality may express itself, and that he too may show his pleasure in his work by the delicacy of the finish, and where possible the beauty of the ornament with which he adorns it. That this is difficult in these days of machinery no one will gainsay, but in village industries it is still possible; and the interest which can be put

into a lonely woman's life by giving her a share in such an industry as weaving either wool, silk, or flax is greater than any will believe who have not seen a woman's whole expression change as she describes to you the way in which she has puzzled out a new pattern on her loom; for of such weaving we may truly say, that it is 'an art made by the people for the people, a joy to the maker and the user.'

CHINESE RAILWAYS.

By E. C. WILTON, H.B.M. Consular Service, Swatow.

The recent war between China and Japan has drawn general attention to the want of railways in the former country. Japan has over 2500 miles of railway in working order and general use, and these figures are increasing as time goes on. China, on the other hand, has one line in the north from Tientsin to Shanhaikuan, a distance of about 200 miles, and another smaller line which is only 18 miles long in the province of Hupei. The great service rendered by the former during the war opened the eyes of those in authority at Peking and elsewhere to the convenience and necessity of possessing railways which would be able to connect the most important provinces with Peking, the capital of the Chinese Empire.

Many schemes have been already brought forward. One of these proposes a Grand Trunk Line from Canton in the south to Hankow on the River Yangtze, and thence on to Peking, with branch lines wherever political or commercial interests might require them. The distance as the crow flies from Canton to Hankow is about 500 miles, and from Hankow to Peking about 650 miles, making a total distance of 1150 miles. This line would unquestionably exercise a salutary influence on China's commercial welfare, if fair rates and good transport facilities prevailed. The present idea in the minds of prominent Chinese officials is to utilise railroads for military purposes, any question of commercial advantage being quite a secondary matter.

The Tientsin-Shanhaikuan line carries very little in the shape of goods, if exception be made of the coal brought down from the Kaiping Mines, which lie about 80 miles from Tientsin.

The railway from Tientsin to Kaiping was formerly owned by a company of Chinese officials, called the Chinese Engineering and Mining Company. The extension to Shanhaikuan is the property of the Chinese government, and since last year the Tientsin-Kaiping line has passed under government control. Lack of funds is alone hindering the continuance of this line into Manchuria.

A line of railway with the object of connecting Tientsin with the capital, a distance of about 80 miles, has already begun, and is making steady progress. The northern terminus will not be at Peking itself, but at a place called Lu k'ou ch'iao, a few miles away.

The main point of importance, however, is whether a railway will be built to connect southern and central China with the northern capital. Surveying is actually proceeding, but there are those who decline to believe in the earnestness of the Chinese government until the

line shall have become an accomplished fact. Chinese merchants at home and abroad are invited to subscribe to the capital required for the enterprise (about five million pounds sterling); but the ordinary native merchant is a shrewd fellow, and would like to know to what extent the returns would compensate him for the outlay.

Briefly, then, China possesses to-day but two railroads in working order: one in central and one in northern China. The former was built with German material, and under German supervision, at the expense of Viceroy Chang Chih Tung. This viceroy has the reputation of being both honest and patriotic. 'He can handle honey without licking his fingers.' It is his great wish to see railways established throughout China, but the capital and material must, in his opinion, be Chinese. With that end in view, he opened up some very rich iron and coal mines in his jurisdiction, and a short railway-line about eighteen miles in length was laid down to carry iron, coal, and limestone to the southern bank of the River Yangtze, where they are stowed in barges, and towed up to the viceroy's steel and iron works at Hanyang, a place about a mile above the city of Hankow. Viceroy Chang has his country's welfare at heart, but he has yet to learn, if he has not already learnt, that the mere possession of expensive machinery and abundant stores of coal and iron is in itself insufficient to carry out any of his schemes of enterprise. Moreover, too, his lavish expenditure of money, which has included a very large private fortune, has so little to show in actual results that the Chinese government at Peking is inclined to be scared at giving him a free hand.

The second line of railway connects Tientsin with Shanhaikuan, which is at the extremity of the Great Wall of China where it runs down to the shores of the Gulf of Pei-chi-li. This railroad was laid down with the assistance of English engineers and English material, and has proved a success in spite of the disadvantages under which it has laboured. The facilities which it gave during the late war for the transport of soldiers and warlike stores showed even the high officials in Peking that railways, quite apart from all other advantages, are of very great strategical importance. The service cannot of course be compared with that on our home lines, but as regards speed and general efficiency it does not compare very unfavourably with Japanese railway service, except that in Japan the stations are clean and well-built, and the accommodation for passengers is on the whole good, whereas the Chinese stations are small and ill-kept, and the carriages are dirty and uncomfortable.

A branch line runs from Tientsin to Tongku, about thirty miles off, and connects the former city with the historical Taku Forts, which command the entrance to the River Pei Ho.

By a clever use of the situation created by the late war between Japan and China, Russia has secured a concession for her Siberian railway to pass through Northern Manchuria, which, if carried out, will supersede the route by the banks of the Amur to Vladivostock as at first proposed. As more fully explained in the article in *Chambers's Journal* (February 27, 1897) entitled 'The Great Siberian Railway,' this railway will traverse 950

miles of Chinese territory. There is a pre-emption clause by which the railway will pass from its Russian owners to China in thirty years. This route will prove an immense saving in cost, and may also prove to China the value of railways for other than merely military purposes.

BROKEN TOYS.

ONLY a boxful of worn-out toys,
Tumbled and broken by merry boys,
Hopelessly damaged, yet very dear
To the mother who keeps them treasured here.

Often she comes when the day is gone,
And handles them gently, one by one;
For around that box of broken toys
Cling memories sweet of the children's joys.

Neddy has lost his tail, and he
In the matter of legs has only three;
But what did that matter? They loved him so,
Though he was *the* donkey 'that wouldn't go.'

A Noah's Ark next comes to light,
The animals all in a sorry plight;
Poor Noah and Shem are black with blows,
While Japhet is minus his arms and nose.

But oh! when that Ark was smart and new,
There was nothing the inmates could not do;
And the children would carol a merry song
As they made the animals march along.

Here lies a drum, once bright and gay;
It seems to the mother but yesterday
Since she saw them gaily marching round,
As they followed the martial, booming sound.

And here in a corner are whips and knives
That made the joy of their owners' lives;
Whistles and marbles and painted sticks,
Fragments of puzzles, and building bricks.

Where are the children who used to play
With these broken toys unearthed to-day?
Where are the rollicking merry boys
Who filled the house with their fun and noise?

Hushed and still has the old home grown;
The father and mother are left alone.
The *children* have long since gone away;
They are busy men themselves to-day.

Thousands of miles now stretch between
The home they love, with its memories green,
And the land they've sought, where they see on high
The Southern Cross in the midnight sky.

But white-winged messengers come and go,
Buoyed up by love; and the parents know,
In the land that knows no parting pain,
They will surely meet their boys again.

BETH.

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'WANTED IN THE BOARDROOM.'

By VINCENT LAWRENCE.

It is no great effort of imagination to conceive the icy shudder which must have passed through the frame, no matter how sturdy, of that hapless man who in the high and palmy days of Spain was suddenly honoured with an invitation to attend the 'Inquisition.' What a glowing and warm-coloured panorama of the joyousness of life must have swiftly rushed through his brain, as memory provoked him with the thought of how his two or three neighbours had fared when a similar invitation had been extended to them! How one had never returned home alive, and how a second had come back mangled in limb and with distorted brain, having just enough strength left to tell a dark and fearsome tale, and die.

In our own country too, some of the 'At homes' of the past under the auspices of both Catholics and Protestants, as also of Royalty, caused far greater heart-burnings among those who did and those who did not receive invitations than the usual run of such functions do to-day. Our forefathers when requested to attend before the Star Chamber were said sometimes to rub their ears reflectively and not without tenderness, as if taking leave of those serviceable appendages.

And so, in the good old times, when 'man's inhumanity to man' was far more pronounced than it is nowadays, the rulers of the nations requested the presence of this man or of that, often receiving him in so hearty and decided a manner that a second invitation was uncalled for or even impossible.

But 'the old order changeth' into a new order, which to-day is so familiar to tens of thousands of the subjects of that dear sovereign who has longest occupied a royal throne: 'You are wanted in the Boardroom.'

There is nothing dreadful in the words themselves, any more than there is in a postman's knock. But men of county court expectations

and many creditors have been observed to pale at the harmless letter-carrier's advent, while scarcely any man receives an invitation to the Boardroom with equanimity. Of course there are exceptions. There are such things as 'rises in salary,' accompanied with words of encouragement and eulogy, or again, words of eulogy and encouragement unaccompanied by any appreciable gain. In both of these instances a visit to the Boardroom is usually necessary.

But as a rule, as a hard and fast rule, it may be taken that the man who is wanted in the Boardroom will exhibit symptoms of advanced perturbation, such as a dropping of the jaws and a certain wildness of eye. It is part of his difficulty too, that his confrères or fellow-workers cannot or do not afford him any sympathy. They seem to regard him in the same philosophical mood as the occupant of a warm and cheery room does the belated pedestrian, whom he observes, through his window, struggling with the blinding storm outside. The comfort and safety grow still more comfortable and secure by contrast; and trouble (to the spectators) is not such a bad thing after all.

Until that yellow-letter day arrive, when a man's liver proclaims its supremacy over the other organs of his body, he is apt to quickly discern the feeblest glimmer of light and hope in the most dreary sky. In a government office, however, even the most sanguine of young men know that when they are wanted in the Boardroom their prospect of rising in the service is more remote than it was before they were wanted, if indeed it has not entirely disappeared, as anything advantageous is sure to be communicated quietly through the 'chief.' In the office of a public company the summons is not quite so ominous. There is just a *chance*; and although the person wanted will probably at first 'start like a guilty thing,' and make a hurried and comprehensive examination of conscience, crying '*mea culpa*' to a wealth of offences; yet he may in the end decide to 'buck up,' as our soldiers say, and will proceed to ascend the stair which leadeth to

the Boardroom, with an expression of countenance displaying a choice blend of hope and despair.

For the Boardroom is nearly always upstairs, seldom on the ground floor; never in the basement. So the procession goes up headed by the chief clerk with sombre mien, as befits one who already knows the verdict and sentence. And now the culprit is ushered into the chamber, and the moment he enters, if he have any experience or historic knowledge, he knows that his first impression was the correct one, and that he is surely doomed. If it had been a matter of commendation, he would have been received with looks of encouragement and smiles of approbation. As it is, all the directors' eyes are fixed on the table. Thumbs are down as it were, dead down. There is, happily, an unwillingness on the part of commercial governors to speak hard words to those under their rule, and so ours turn their eyes to the table, the chiefest and most indispensable piece of furniture in the room. The heavy, smooth-topped, massive Boardroom table over which many skilful operations are carried through with and without stimulants; where accounts are dissected, and where our culprit has metaphorically lain unconscious and helpless, while the chairman or secretary has exposed his internal blemishes, and then quickly sewn up the body again, which now only waits to be 'sacked.'

Well, perhaps not so great a punishment as this: May it be, say, only a severe reprimand or a sentence of deprivation of the annual salary increase for one year or more. May the directors, God bless them, be ever moved to leniency; revoke the sentence decided upon, and, as in the case before the mind's eye of the writer, 'give the beggar another chance; but a last one, mind you, a last one.'

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER X.—'DEAD NUTS.'

It was three o'clock in the early morning of the twentieth of August. A single jet of gas, lighting a torch in the mailed hand of a life-size man-at-arms, burned audibly in the silent hall, making the worst of each lugubrious feature, like a match struck in a cavern. And Claude Lafont was sitting up alone, in the Poet's Corner, at work upon his birthday offering to Olivia Sellwood.

At three, however, it was finished in the rough. The poet then stretched his fingers, took a clean sheet of paper, and started upon the fair copy in his prettiest hand. It began—

'What songs have I to sing you?
What tales have I to tell?'

And there it stuck, as though these questions were indeed unanswerable; the fact being there was another still to come, which, however, involved an execrable couplet as it stood. Claude twisted it about for half-an-hour; realised its gratuitous badness; tried not to ask this inane question at all; hunted his rhyming dictionary up and down and found he must; and finally,

with a prayer that it might impose upon Olivia, and another for forgiveness from the Muse, finished his first stanza with—

'What garlands can I bring you
From Fancy's fairest dell?
Before the world grew old, dear,
The lute was lightlier strung;
Now all the tales are told, dear,
And all the songs are sung.'

It is needless to quote more. The sentiments were superior to their setting. An affectionate *camaraderie* was employed, with success, as a cloak for those warmer feelings of whose existence in his own bosom the poor poet was now only too sure. And the lines in themselves were not all or wholly bad; there was a certain knack in them, and here and there some charm. But if infinite pains could have made them a work of genius, that they would have been. It was almost five when Claude made his best signature at the foot of the last verse; yet there were but four of these, or thirty-two lines in all.

He put them in an envelope, which he sealed deliberately with his signet-ring. The deliberation of all his private doings was enormous; neither the hour nor an empty stomach could induce briskness at the expense of pains. Yet Claude was exceedingly hungry, and the night had put an edge on his nerves. As he paced the floor the undue distinction between his steps, so soft on the rugs, and so loud on the parquetry, became exaggerated in his nervous ears; and all the silence and all the darkness of the sleeping Towers seemed to press upon that single lamp-lit, sounding room, like fathoms of wide sea upon a diver's helmet. Claude had not thought of such things while he was still at work; he had rather overdone matters, and he poured out a sparing measure of whisky from the decanter upon the table.

There were other glasses with dregs at the bottom. The air was tainted with stale smoke, and within the fender lay the remains of many cigarettes. This was why Claude was so late. He had been late in making a start. Stubbs and Llewellyn had sat up with him till after one. The Poet's Corner was the one spot in which these young men seemed really at home. Here, by midnight, but seldom before, they could manage to create unto themselves their own element; for their Philistine host went early to his eccentric lair; but there were always his easy-chairs to lounge in, his whisky to drink, and Claude Lafont to listen to their talk.

Not that the poet was so good a listener as he had been once; the truth being that he found himself a little out of touch with his clever friends, he hardly knew why. It might be the living under one roof with them; he himself would never have asked them down. Or it might be the simultaneous hourly contact with an opposite type of man—the kindly, unaffected dunce—the unburnished nugget reeking yet of the

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Australian soil, but with the gold wearing brighter every day.

Certain it was that the benefit of the cousins' close companionship had not been all on one side. If the force of example had toned down some of Jack's pristine roughness of speech and manner, it had taken a like effect upon certain peculiarities of a converse character in Claude. In a word, there had been an ideal interchange between the two, founded on a mutual liking. The amelioration of the Duke was sufficiently obvious to all; that of Claude struck Olivia especially, who had never been blind to his faults; needless to add, he was himself the last to see how he had changed. Yet he divined something of it now. As he thought of the verses he had just written, and of the critic to whom he would have submitted them in all humility a couple of months ago, he knew that he was no longer as he had been then, for he had not the faintest intention of allowing that critic to see these verses at all.

So Claude calmed his nerves, eating biscuits the while and sipping soda-water merely tintured with whisky; until all at once the lamp began to flicker and to smell, and the song of the birds, singing in Olivia's birthday, came at last to his ears through the plate-glass and rich curtains of the octagonal window. Then he rose, and in half a minute the lamp was out, the curtains drawn, a sash thrown up, and the risen sun shining mercilessly on the dishevelled head and blue chin and battered shirt-front of Claude Lafont.

The cool, fresh scene inspired him with delight; it was indeed a disgraceful novelty to the poet. He thought nothing of rhyming 'morn' with 'dawn,' and yet of this phenomenon itself he had little or no experience. He would gain some now; he also promised himself the unique pleasure of rousing the early-rising Jack. So he got out of the window, and soaked his feet in the dew, only to meet Jack emerging from his hut, with towels on his arm, as he approached it. Nor was the Duke's surprise very flattering; but his chaff was fair enough. He was himself about to bathe in the creek at the north end of the tank. Would Claude join him and then go back to the hut for an early pannikin of bush tea? Claude would, and did, feeling (as all felt at Jack's hut) that he had been slashed through the thick of the earth, and come out in the wilds of Australia.

In the hut a log fire had burned well up by the time they returned with wet towels and glowing skins. Over the flames hung the billy-can, with boiling water throbbing against the side. Jack lifted it down with a stick and threw a handful of tea among the bubbles. 'Shall I sweeten it?' he then asked; and, at Claude's nod, threw in another handful of brown sugar.

'There, that's real bush tea for you,' continued the Duke, in a simmer of satisfaction himself as he stirred the mixture with a stick. 'Now take the pannikin and dip it in. There's no milk, mind; that wouldn't be the thing at all. Here are some biscuits, and they aren't the thing either. I'd have made you a damper, only I never could strike a camp-oven; it's been trouble enough to raise the plant I've got. What do you think of the tea?'

'Capital!' cried Claude, who was seated on the bunk. And indeed the whole thing appealed to

his poetic palate; for he could not forget that this hut was within half-a-mile of the Towers themselves, in which my Lord Duke took evidently far less pleasure; and the many-sided contrast amused his literary sense, even while it piqued his family pride.

'How I wish it was the real thing!' said Jack, with a sigh. 'I'd have a camp-oven, then, and you should have your mutton chop and damper served up hot. I used to be an artist at a damper. Then after breakfast I'd take you with me round the paddocks, and you'd help me muster a mob and drive them to the tank. And you'd hear them bleat and see them start to run when they smelt the water; my Colonial oath, I can see 'em and hear 'em now! Then we'd give our mokes a drink in the middle of 'em, and we'd take a pull at our own water-bags too. Then we might camp under the nearest hop-bush for a snack; and I should yard you up at the homestead and make you know my old boss before the day was over. What a day it would be for you! You wouldn't believe the sky could get so blue or your face so red. But it's no use talking; here we are again!' And he set down his empty pannikin with another sigh.

'You wouldn't really prefer that life to this?'

'No, perhaps not; but I like to think of it, as you can see.'

'Surely you like your new life best by this time? You wouldn't go back there now?'

'I like my new friends best; I wouldn't go back on them. Olivia and you, for instance.'

'It's her birthday,' said Claude; but a silence had intervened.

'So it is. God bless her! I haven't got her anything, because I seemed to make a mull of it with those flowers. Have you?'

'Yes, I have a trifle for her; it's rather a different thing on her birthday, you know. And—and I've written her a few verses; that's what I've been doing all night.'

'Clever dog!' said Jack enviously. 'See what it is to be a man of genius; here's where it comes in so handy. And has Llewellyn done her something too?'

'Yes; a portrait of herself.'

'Well, let him label it to that effect, or she may put her foot in it like me. He never shows me his blooming drawings now; but I wish you'd let me see your poem.'

'It's not all that; it's only verses, and bad ones at that; still, you shall hear them if you like, and if I can remember them,' said Claude, who would have found much more difficulty in forgetting them so soon. 'They're not very good. There are some lamentable lines here and there. I tried to iron them out, but they wouldn't all come.'

'Go on!' said Jack, lighting his pipe. 'I'll tell you whether they're good or bad. You go ahead!'

And Claude did so, only too glad of a second opinion of any kind; for he had little or no intellectual self-reliance, and was ever ready to think his productions good or bad with their latest critic. On this occasion, however, he would have been better pleased with the general enthusiasm of the Duke had not the latter proceeded to point out particular merits, when it transpired that the ingenuity of the rhymes was

what impressed him most. Knowing where they came from, the poet himself was unable to take much pride in this feature.

'They're splendid,' reiterated Jack. 'You ought to be the laureate, old man, and I've a good mind to tell 'em so in the House of Lords. You're far and away ahead of Shakespeare at rhyming; he hardly ever rhymes at all; I know that, because there used to be a copy of him in my old hut. I say, I like that about the garlands from fancy's dell; that's real poetry, that is. But do you mind giving me the last four lines again?'

Claude gave them—

'While yet the world was young, dear,
The minstrel might be bold:
Now all the songs are sung, dear,
And all the tales are told.'

'First-chop,' said Jack, whose look, however, was preoccupied. 'But what is it you're driving at about the minstrel being bolder? What was it you'd have said if only you'd had the cheek? Say it to me. Out with it!'

'I don't know, really,' said Claude, laughing.

'Then I do: you're dead nuts on Olivia!'

'What's that?'

'You like her!'

'Naturally.'

'As much as I do!'

'That all depends how much you like her, Jack.'

There was a moment's pause. The Duke was sitting on his heels in front of the fire, into which he was also staring fixedly; so that it was impossible to tell whether the red light upon his face was spontaneous or reflected. And he spoke out now without turning his head.

'Old man,' he said, 'I've wanted a straight word with you this long time—about Olivia. Of course I know I oughtn't to call her Olivia behind her back, when I daren't to her face; but that's what she is in my own heart, you see, where she's pegged out a claim for good and all. Understand? We can't all talk like books, old man! Still, I want to make myself as plain as possible.'

'You do so. I understand perfectly,' said Claude Lafont.

'That's all right. Well, as I was saying, she's pegged out a claim that no other woman is ever going to jump. And what I was going to say was this: you remember that night in your rooms in town? I mean, when I said I meant no harm, and all that; well, I spoke too soon. Worse still, I felt mean when I spoke the word; it didn't ring true; and long I've known that even then there was only one thing that would have held me back. That was—if she'd been your girl! I gave you a chance of saying if she was, but you only laughed; and sometimes I've thought your laugh wasn't any truer than my word. So I've got to have it in plain English before I go the whole hog. Claude—old man—she never was—your girl?'

'Never,' said Claude decidedly.

'You never asked her—what I think of asking one of these days.'

'Never.'

'Thank God! I'm dead nuts on her myself, I tell you frankly; and I mean to tell her when I can rake together the pluck. I'm not sure I can

keep it to myself much longer. The one thing I'm sure of is that she'll laugh in my face—if she isn't too riled! I hear her doing it every night of my life as I lie where you're sitting and listen to the pines outside. I hear her saying every blessed thing but "yes!" Yet it isn't such cheek as all that, is it, old man? I want your candid opinion. I'm not such a rough nugget as I was that day you met me, am I?'

And he turned to the other with a simple strong humility, very touching in him; but Claude jumped up, and getting behind him so that their eyes should not meet, laid his hands affectionately on the Duke's shoulders.

'You are not the same man,' he said with a laugh; 'yet you are the same good fellow! I could wish Olivia no better fate—than the one you think of. So I wish you luck—from my heart—and now let us go.'

On the lawn they found the Home Secretary driving a dozen golf-balls into space from an impromptu tee. He had come for good now, the session being over at last. And this was his daily exercise before breakfast, and his valet's daily penance, whose duty it was to recover the balls.

Mr Sellwood accompanied the younger men into the house, where Claude had still to shave and dress; but the Duke was the uninterested witness of an interesting scene, between the Home Secretary and his wife, before any one else came down from breakfast. The subject was that of the Nottingham murder.

'They are making an example of you!' said Lady Caroline bitterly, looking up from her husband's daily stack of press-cuttings, which she always opened.

'Let them,' said Mr Sellwood, from the depths of the *Sportsman*, which he read before any of his letters.

'They call it a judicial murder—and, upon my word, so do I! Your decision is most unpopular; they clamour for your resignation—and I must say that I should do the same. Here's a cartoon of you in last night's *Herald*; they make you playing golf with a human skull for the ball. And no wonder!'

'Exactly how I mean to spend my day—barring the skull.'

'They know it, too; it's a public scandal; even if it wasn't, I should be ashamed of myself, with that poor man awaiting his end!'

'He was hanged five minutes ago,' declared the Home Secretary, consulting his watch. 'And I may as well tell you, my dear, that I had his full confession in my pocket when I gave my decision the night before last. It appears in this morning's papers. And I fancy that's my hole,' added Mr Sellwood, nodding at Jack.

But Jack had no more to say than Lady Caroline, utterly routed for once. The Duke did not perhaps appreciate the situation; or perhaps he was not listening; for his eyes hung very wistfully on Olivia's plate, which was laden and surrounded by birthday offerings of many descriptions. There were several packets by post, and an open cheque from the Home Secretary. Claude had added his beautifully sealed envelope before going upstairs, and now Llewellyn came in with his 'likeness of a lady.' The lady was evidently lost in a fog; the likeness did not exist; and the whole production was

exactly like a photographic failure which is both out of focus and 'over-exposed.' But it was better than poor Jack's contribution of nothing at all.

THE GREAT SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

By JOHN GEDDIE,
Author of *The Russian Empire*, &c.

IN May 1705 Peter the Great founded his new capital, thereby breaking out, through the channel of the Neva, 'a window into Europe.' In the same month in 1891 the present Emperor, Nicholas II., then Czarewitch, cut the first sod of the greatest of Russia's engineering undertakings, the Trans-Siberian Railway, at Vladivostok, the 'Golden Gate' of the East. If official calculations hold good, the vast work will be complete from end to end in the course of the summer of 1905, and the traveller will then be able to journey by rail in a fortnight from the shores of the Baltic to those of the Gulf of Tartary.

Russians believe in auspicious anniversaries; and there will probably be an effort to make the opening of the railway across Siberia coincide with the second centenary of the founding of St Petersburg. The one event is the complement of the other. What Russia needed most two centuries ago was light. What she now chiefly strives after is space. If it was necessary in 1705 to open a front window into the Baltic, it will be felt not less urgent in 1905 to open a back door into the Pacific.

The ruling powers of Russia would perhaps have been glad, on several grounds, to have postponed for some time longer the task of taking up and pressing forward to completion of a project that has been before their minds ever since the Crimean War, if not earlier. Economically and financially, Russia is not yet in the most advantageous position for tackling an enterprise so stupendous. Even if the estimates of cost are not exceeded, it will be for long a heavy drain on the resources of a country which has not much to spare for commercial adventures beyond the Urals. It will hamper and impede the progress, none too rapid, of internal reforms. But there were considerations that imperatively demanded that the work should be taken in hand without delay; and these were at least as much political and military, and even social, as connected with trading and industrial development.

China has been giving the world further proofs of her decrepitude and helplessness. The two great Western Powers—Great Britain and France—have planted themselves firmly upon her southern border, and are striving, by the opening of new land and water routes, to obtain a commercial command of her rich back provinces that some day may take the form of territorial appropriation. Germany is in the offing, eagerly watching for an opportunity of stepping in and claiming a share in the 'partition of China.' Above all, there has been the phenomenal rise of the Empire of Japan to the position of a great naval and trading power in the Pacific. Her recent easy triumph, by land and sea, over her bulky and inert neighbour was the final demonstration of the first-class importance of Japan as a factor

in Eastern politics; it proved, moreover, that Japanese policy has before it a settled and resolute purpose, and behind it the impelling force of a united and patriotic national feeling.

While such movements were going forward, Russia could not afford to remain quiescent. She, too, must open her trade routes and establish herself firmly along the Chinese borderlands and on the shores of the Pacific—if possible on waters unobstructed by ice all the year round—if she was to have a hand in the game in which she means to play the trump card. She must make her 'contiguity to China' a real and effectual fact, and not a mere geographical expression. She must be ready and able to put down her foot and stretch forth her hands when the day comes for the dividing of the spoil. This may in part be done by the opening and improvement of sea and river routes. But obviously the one strong and indispensable band for fastening the basin of the Amur to that of the Volga is the 'link of steel' of a Trans-Siberian Railway.

Other reasons, not less weighty, demanded that the work should go forward in right earnest. Enormous as is the area of European Russia, the country is beginning to be found too narrow for a growing population already numbering over a hundred millions of souls, who are for the most part directly dependent on the produce of the soil. In many provinces there is even now a congested rural population, with the natural consequences of increasing pauperism, and discontent, and recurring famines.

The settlement of Siberia therefore is thrust upon her as a national necessity as well as a national good. Hitherto, during the three centuries she has more or less held possession, she has used Siberia as the lumber-room—nay, as the 'cesspool'—of the Empire. The country is in many parts prodigiously fertile, and abounds in forest and mineral wealth. Important towns, the centres of agricultural, mining, and manufacturing industry, have sprung up on the banks of the great Siberian rivers and at their roots among the hills. What these cities—Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk, and the rest—chiefly suffer from is their isolation; the vast distances, traversed only by sledge or lumbering *tarantass*, that separate them from each other and from the great centres of European civilisation and trade. Emigration has for many years been running with a quickened current across the Urals, which look more of a barrier on the maps than they are in nature. Colonisation of the rich farming, stock-raising, and metalliferous regions of Siberia has begun in earnest. It needed but the opening of a railway to make the stream a flood.

The scheme of laying a line of railway from the Urals to the Chinese frontier and the Pacific had long been maturing in the minds of the rulers of Russia. But in the end, the decision in the crucial questions of route, point of departure, and terminus, and plan and time of construction had to be taken with some degree of precipitancy. When the problem was finally settled by the Special Commission of 1890, three routes came into competition. One was a modification of a plan chosen fifteen years before, by which the Ural Mines Railway would have been connected with Nijni-Novgorod and extended from Tiumen

towards the east. Another was a prolongation of the Orenburg railway across the waterless and almost uninhabited steppes to the East, to the great Barnaul mining district and the skirts of the Altai chain. The route selected was a middle way. It is a continuation eastward of the line passing through Samara, Ufa, and Zlatoust, to Miass and Cheliabinsk within the borders of Siberia.

Its merits and demerits compared with the competing routes need not now be discussed. Among its advantages is the fact that it passes through the fertile and relatively well-peopled 'Tchernozem' zone of the province of Tobolsk, avoiding alike the great marshes and forests and wide rivers of the north, and the arid and desert steppes to the south. It will feed itself, and feed the country behind and ahead, as it advances. In point of distance there is not much to choose between the three routes, but what advantage there is in favour of that adopted. It has further to be had in mind that the other two are postponed only, not abandoned; that the destined tracks converge on each other and meet at Nijni Udinsk, fully a third on the way across Siberia; and that already the Ural Mines Railway is being coupled to the Trans-Siberian by a connecting line from Ekaterinburg to Cheliabinsk.

This latter town is taken as the starting-point of the Great Siberian Railway, and it must be remembered that on reaching it the traveller, say from Calais, will have already made a journey of well-nigh 3000 miles over land. Beyond it, the line, as the route is at present laid down, traverses a distance of 7083 versts, or, including branch lines, 7112 versts, roughly 4800 miles, to Vladivostok. The route and plan of construction once resolved upon, the government lost no time in entering upon the work. The final decision was not taken until the end of February 1891, at which date the Zlatoust-Miass line had not yet been carried on to the starting-point of the great Siberian Railway at Cheliabinsk. Three months later, as has already been mentioned, the present Emperor had cut the first sod at the other or eastern extremity of the line, and entered upon the active work of direction, which was confided to a special government department of which His Majesty is president.

The Ussuri or extreme eastern section of the railway, the construction of which, as we know from a statement prepared for the Chicago Exhibition by the Russian Department of Trade and Manufactures, occupied the 'first rank' in the consideration of the government, is likely to fall into the last. The design was to make it the connecting link between the Amur basin and Vladivostok—the beginning towards the east of the great chain of overland communication. But if the new plan be adopted, by which the 'Chinese Eastern Railway' will start from a point on the Trans-Baikal section of the original line, and be carried across Manchuria for a distance of nearly thirteen hundred miles, mostly on Chinese territory, to Nikolsk, near Lake Khanko, some seventy miles from Vladivostok, the line of the Lower Amur will lose its importance, and be superseded by a route which will be three or four hundred miles shorter, besides passing through a warmer, more fertile, and more populous region. The ultimate terminus of the line is reported to

be, not the intermittently open harbour of Vladivostok, but Newchang or Port Arthur on the Gulf of Pechili. Then again, should the more ambitious scheme that aims at joining the Siberian line with Peking and the Yellow Sea come into existence, both the longer and the shorter routes which have the 'bay of the Golden Horn' as their terminus would sink to mere feeders of the main line of overland trade and travel to the east.

In the meantime, the Manchurian lines are as yet only projects, while the Ussuri section is a partly completed work. It was begun, as we have seen, in the early summer of 1891; and according to the official calculations, the first half of it, to Gravsk, was to have been completed in 1894, and the remaining portion, to Khabarovka on the Amur, in the course of last year. But many unexpected difficulties were met with that have tended to delay progress; and M. de Windt, who passed over the completed part of the line in 1895, does not give a very flattering account of its condition, working, and immediate prospects.

Quite a different report can be made concerning the western section of the Trans-Siberian line, begun at the same time. It is already an effective part of the Russian railway system, and is fulfilling an important function in the distribution of products and population between Europe and Asia. Of it also we have a description from the pen of an eye-witness of its condition and progress—Mr J. Y. Simpson, who, in a paper in *Blackwood*, relates what he observed and experienced on a journey half-way across Siberia in the early summer of last year. A substantial and well-engineered road was found to extend to the Obi River, 1325 versts from Cheliabinsk. Some time will probably elapse before the bridge across the broad and turbid Obi is completed, but beyond this gap the line had in May last been carried forward in a rough state through a hilly and forest region as far as the important town of Krasnoyarsk, on the Yenisei, over 2000 versts from Cheliabinsk, or two-sevenths of the whole way across Siberia. An enormous army of labourers, free and convict—Mr Simpson says 62,000 in all—are employed on the line. No wonder then, that in spite of the extraordinarily primitive appliances employed in road-building, embanking, and pile-driving, rapid progress is being made with the railway. On his outward journey to Irkutsk, this traveller had to drive beyond Krasnoyarsk. On his return, a few weeks later, he was able to join a special wagon 103 versts east of that place. The distance over the roughly laid section, between the Obi to Krasnoyarsk, took four days going out, and only thirty-six hours coming back.

In this region, then, except when arrested by the imperious hand of the Siberian winter, the railway is advancing almost visibly. The most western section of the railway, that from Cheliabinsk to the Obi, has been completed within the appointed time, and, what is perhaps more remarkable, within the estimated cost of forty-seven millions of roubles. But it has to be remembered that this is at once the most accessible, the most easily engineered, and economically the most profitable part of the line. As, says the Russian official authority quoted, it 'runs through a fertile

zone of black earth, where climatic conditions are favourable to the cultivation of cereals, especially within the borders of the Ishimsk and Barabinsk steppes, where gradients are easy, and 'during the whole length, as far as the Obi, there are hardly any obstacles to interfere with the laying down of the line,' beyond the crossing of the large rivers Tobol, Ishim, and Irtysh.

Beyond the Obi, and on to Irkutsk, a distance of 1748 versts, the face of the country gradually changes; and the engineering problem becomes progressively more difficult to deal with. The plain country is left for the *taiga*, or forest zone, a region of hills and of pine-woods; and the gradients become more steep as one advances eastward and rises to a higher level. For the same reason, climatic conditions do not improve, notwithstanding that, after leaving the Obi, the line takes a more southerly set, and moves gradually down from the fifty-fifth to the fifty-third degree of latitude. Speaking of the topographical and technical features of this first section of the Central Siberian division of the road, and more particularly of the 1200 versts between Atchinsk and Irkutsk, the Russian official report remarks that the line has to cross two large rivers, the Chulym and the Yenisei, with their numerous tributaries; 'most of the Siberian streams in this part of the country run from north to south, whilst the general direction of the railway is from west to east, and therefore the line must intersect the whole of the spot-summit levels of these rivers, only excepting the valleys of some small streams which flow from east to west.' These levels, composed of spurs of the Altai and its subsidiary chains, 'are very high, and so narrow that there is no possibility of diminishing the steepness of the incline;' and many sharp curves and heavy earthworks will be required.

These difficulties are, however, but child's-play compared to those that will have to be faced when, leaving the capital of Siberia behind, the line proceeds to make a circuit round the southern end of Lake Baikal and to cross, at its summit level of 3685 feet, the great Yablonovai range into the basin of the Amur. For a distance of fifty-four miles the line follows the margin of the great inland sea, which is here enclosed by rocky walls. Cutting and tunnelling on a formidable scale, through hard granite, gneiss, and sandstone, will be rendered necessary; and the mountain floods and snowstorms of this moist region entail elaborate and costly precautions. This section will probably be one of the last to be completed; and in anticipation of the delay, the government proposed to place on the lake a steamer of four thousand tons, which will transport the train bodily to the station of Mysovsk and will be provided with apparatus for breaking a way through the ice.

But even after leaving Baikal, the obstacles to be surmounted are hardly less serious. The climate becomes drier; but it also becomes more rigorous. In ascending to the summit-crossing of the Yablonovai mountains, and still more in descending the Shilka and Selenga to their parent stream, the Amur, the railway is at length able to follow the natural line of the valleys, instead of crossing them at right angles. But an immense amount of embanking will be requisite on this Trans-Baikal section; and the cost and labour of

this will be increased incalculably from the fact that the subsoil, in a region where even in summer the mean temperature is little if at all above freezing-point, is permanently frozen at a short distance below the surface. With each remove eastward, also, the population grows sparser; a rule that may be said to hold generally good for the railway throughout its length. In compensation, it is stated that in the crossing of the Yablonovai, important deposits of coal have been found, while at Stretinsk, on the Shilka, the line will be within easy reach of the rich gold and silver mines of the Nerchinsk district, so famous, or infamous, in the annals of Siberian exile and crime.

Stretinsk is about 1300 versts from Irkutsk, and the remaining 2000 versts of the line, to Khabarovka, where the Amur section joins that of the Ussuri, 'has not,' as we learn from the official statement, 'been thoroughly investigated in detail, only some slight reconnoitring having been done when the estimates of cost were drawn.' This has, however, been enough to show that the construction of the railway will be rendered difficult 'by the completely desert nature of the country, covered with dense virgin forests, the silence of which has not been broken by the voice of man,' and the long distances over which workmen and ready-made railway appliances will have to be conveyed. The very question of the route may almost be said to be still in abeyance.

Thus no safe inference as to the total expense, or even as to the date of completion of the railway, can be drawn from the experience of laying the more western and easier sections. Doubtless all expedition will be used in pushing on the line to Irkutsk, which may be reached within the time set—namely, in 1900. In 1899 the Trans-Baikal and Amur sections will be begun, and work on the Baikal circuit section will not be commenced until the following year. The estimate that the whole line will be in working order by the year 1905 is hardly likely to be realised. Still less probable is it that the total cost of the Great Siberian Railway will fall within the sum of 350,210,482 roubles, or, taking the rouble at its nominal value, thirty-five millions sterling, at which it was originally set down. It will be strange if, all things reckoned, the cost to the government of Russia falls much, or any, short of fifty millions sterling.

Besides this initial outlay, the working of it is certain to entail for many years a burden on the Russian Treasury. The opening of the line for through traffic, it has been seen, will be the affair of the early years of next century. But the industrial and agricultural development of Siberia, and of the countries bordering on the Pacific, on a scale large enough to make this vast enterprise profitable, must be postponed to a date considerably more remote; and not even in the conveyance of such high-priced goods as tea and silk is the overland route likely to compete successfully under present conditions with the sea route in the markets of Western Europe.

On the other hand, the political, the social, and the economical influences of the Great Siberian Railway begin already to be felt. Every year they will become more marked. One problem of extraordinary interest is being worked out along the line. Convict labour, under a gang

system, is being applied to the building of the railway. In the western and central sections at least it is said to be attended with excellent results. For prisoners, eight months of railway labour reckons as one year's imprisonment, and exiles have their terms shortened by counting one year as two. They are working out their own salvation.

A yet more tremendous question, for Russia and for other countries, is that of the free colonisation of Siberia. This has at length begun in earnest. The running eastward of the line into the fertile plains of the Irtysh and the Obi has been like cutting a gap in a dam. A rush of emigrants from the crowded communes of Great and Little Russia has followed, and every year it has grown in volume. The temptations held out by the government to the peasants to settle in the provinces of Tobolsk and Tomsk—cheap railway fares and a free allotment of forty-three acres of Crown land—do not seem extravagant, considering the remoteness of the scene and the severity of the winter climate. But they have been sufficient to set a great human tide flowing eastward. In the month of May last year alone 100,000 of these new settlers and their families emigrated into Siberia by rail. The government had mismanaged shockingly the arrangements for their reception. Mr Simpson found wretched companies of them crowded about the little stations on the route, unhoused, uncared for, dying of typhus and other epidemics. Only ignorant and needy peasant folk were in the rush. The official idea of granting land privileges to 'Russian nobles and individuals in the government service,' as the means of introducing a 'cultured and civilising influence into the country,' does not seem yet to have taken effect. Perhaps the grantees are content to hold their privileges as absentees.

What will come of this peopling of the Great North-east—this stocking of a vast and empty, but fertile space of the earth with the elements of future trade and wealth indeed, but also of crime, discontent, and disorder—will be the story of the beginning of next century, or more probably of its middle or end.

PHIL'S PARD.

CHAPTER IV.—HOW IT PANNED OUT.

OVER the hard yellow earth of the thirsty desert Philossifer Phil and Jim Annersley galloped side by side, with Plummer's now seven miles in front of them, and death in its most horrible form—God only knew how close behind them. Gamely the wiry horses of the prairie laid themselves out to their work; yet, oh, so slowly did the weary miles go by—miles of everlasting plain, dotted at intervals with funereal cacti, *Cereus giganteus*, that rose like mournful obelisks from the ground to mark each the spot where the Indians had murdered a white man. And away in the west Mount San Jacinto smiled down upon the little drama that was being played on the *mesa* before it.

By-and-by the ground began to dip slightly. The monotonous ranks of cacti closed up thicker and thicker until they reached a tangle of mesquite that fringed another 'dobe hole. But Phil did not dare to draw rein to water the beasts,

though the ruddy brown fluid would have been grateful enough to the panting brutes. Plummer's was still four miles ahead, and the Indians must be coming up rapidly behind. Not another word had passed between the fugitives.

The 'dobe hole and the mesquite were left behind, and the mustangs were pounding heavily up the rising ground. The sun was stooping to kiss the summit of the San Jacinto, and still the yellow sunshine laughed on, and the yellow desert laughed back, though night and death were now fast coming up to end the sport. Every stride was telling—and telling painfully, too—on the girl's horse, but Phil's was made of tougher fibre, and was exhibiting no particular signs of distress.

As they reached the level ground once more, the philosopher turned in his saddle for a hasty glance backward, and as he did so the war-whoop of the pursuers thrilled through the still air as they again sighted the quarry. The thunder of their ponies' hoofs came rumbling to the ear, as the screaming fiends poured hotly down the declivity towards the 'dobe hole. Jim Annersley looked at Phil, and Phil looked at her.

'Real grit, remember!' he whispered encouragingly, with no tremor in his voice, and the girl smiled back bravely as she noticed his hand stray to his belt to make sure that his revolver was there. And the hunted and hunters swept on.

Plummer's was now three long miles away, the Apaches less than a mile behind, and coming up hand over hand, for Jim's pony was faltering frightfully. Its heart was good enough, but its legs were done, and Phil had to ride with a tight rein to keep pace with it. For another mile it struggled on gamely, but the effort cost the poor brute its life. A stumble, a stagger! Up again, only to stumble once more! Phil was by the girl's side, his right arm round her waist.

'Kick yer feet outen the stirrups! Lean this way—thar!' and he had swung her on to his own horse in front of him. Then he let the mustang out, and away they pelted with increased speed over the plain, as a hideous yell of disappointment ripped the air from the midst of the cloud of dust that came tearing along behind them. Yet the girl felt a strange sense of security in the midst of danger, as her shoulders touched the big rough breast behind her, and the miner's warm breath upon her neck fanned her courage.

From the bluff towards which they were flying, echo flung back the screams of the bronzed warriors derisively. The mirth had died out of the dancing sunshine. San Jacinto had laughed itself purple, for the sun had touched its loftiest peak, and the deep blue shadow of the mountain was creeping out across the cañon on to the *mesa*. Phil's horse was laying itself out to its work bravely, but its double burden handicapped it heavily, and the remorseless tide of dust and death rolled on nearer and nearer.

'What are you thinking of?' whispered the girl. 'Molasses,' Phil returned promptly; and Jim wondered how it was possible for a man in the direst peril—whose fate hung upon a hair fine as that which suspended the sword of Damocles, to think of such a trivial thing as—*molasses*! It was almost incredible. Jim Annersley was in ignorance of the couplings in the philosopher's train of thoughts.

'Say, miss, you warn't tryin' to bluff me when

you said you didn't keer fur that carrot-headed Irish grocery man?' he inquired casually.

'No. Mr Marpleson, does it—does it hurt awful to be killed?'

'An' you hedn't no notion, afore the dirt caved in an' laid him out, of consolidatin' with your cousin Haliday?'

'No, no! But, Mr Marpleson, is it awful painful to die a violent death?'

'Dunno,' replied Phil nonchalantly. 'I ain't been thar, an', please God, I ain't goin' this trip. Thar's Plummers—over yonder!' as they rushed round the bluff.

Down the steep side of the creek they clattered; over the dried-up bed of the watercourse, and scrambled up the other side on to the mesa. It was now a race of a mile and a half to Plummer's, and a straight course.

Two of the infuriated savages, who had outstripped their fellows in their wild thirst for blood, pulled up as they swung round the bluff, and took a flying shot at the refugees. One ball whizzed harmlessly over the plain; the other ripped through the fleshy part of Phil's shoulder and grazed the girl's fair cheek, and their blood fell and mingled on the saddle.

'I reckon this yer is bed-rock affairs; an' when we git down to bed-rock, we begin to blast,' the philosopher argued coolly, as he unslung his rifle, slewed round the mustang, and pulled up. Hastily but carefully taking aim, he let fly.

'Guess that's one fur his nob anyhow!' he muttered, as the foremost savage tumbled neck and crop from his pony down the steep side of the creek, while the other dropped into cover of a rock, and discreetly preferred to wait until the rest of the yelling horde came up.

Round the bluff they swept, a seething torrent of whooping, fiendish barbarity; but by then Phil had wheeled the mustang round, and, with its dilated, blood-rimmed nostrils once more stretching straight towards the camp, was urging along the jaded beast with voice and spur. Down the loose steep, amid an avalanche of clattering stones, the Apaches rushed. Half a minute later they reappeared upon this side of the creek. Again the shrill war-whoop rang out, and the painted fiends charged over the plain in their last fierce struggle to overtake their victims. San Jacinto loomed huge and darkening against the western effulgence, and its deepening shadow crept farther and farther out to meet the lambent twilight of the east. And still the race went on.

The Indians had now reduced the lead of the pursued to barely more than a quarter of a mile; Plummer's was still distant some six furlongs, and Phil's pony was loping along with a gait that grew every moment more uncertain and unsteady. Poor brute! he was straining every nerve, but his race was almost run, his strength all but spent. Fearful lest their prey should escape them at the last moment, the Apaches commenced firing, as they hurled their ponies break-neck along. However, the pace was much too hot, and the light was now too uncertain for their shooting to be very accurate, and their bullets, for the most part, spent themselves harmlessly over the desert. Still there was the danger of a chance shot finding its billet; and one found it in Phil's elbow, shattering the bone beyond repair. His hand fell helplessly to his side, but he uttered no cry of

pain, and the girl was ignorant, as she turned her face for one brief instant to his, that he was hurt.

Two minutes more—only two minutes!—and the race would end in victory and safety, when Jim Annersley felt something strike her in the back with a sharp thud, and the next instant, with a heavy groan, Philosifer Phil fell heavily forward against her; for the spent bullet, which had harmlessly struck the steel of her corset, had only lost its fatal power in its passage through her protector's body. Quicker than a flash of lightning the truth passed through her brain; and quicker than the thunder follows the flash, she had seized the reins in one hand, and with the other had clutched over her shoulder at the senseless body before it had lost its equilibrium and reeled out of the saddle—clutched it by the first thing which met her hand, and that was the huge, shaggy beard. Lucky for Philip Marpleson that day that he had that great beard, or, assuredly, he had been scalped and carved into little bits by the Indians.

She was only a girl, with a strong man's task before her. How she accomplished it she never knew. Surely it was Heaven-sent strength that braced her muscles and bore her through the terrible ordeal! Stooping forwards, she drew the unconscious man's face over her left shoulder, and held him tightly by the beard, and thus steadied him by bearing a portion of his weight on her own shoulders, while with her right hand she held the reins and gripped the pommel of the saddle—froze to it. Only two hundred—one hundred yards, the hastily-constructed stockade at Plummer's rose in front of her. The piercing yells of the screeching savages, lashed into demoniacal fury by the excitement of the chase, the thunder of their ponies' hoofs on the hard ground, and the crack of their rifles, dinned themselves in a chaotic tumult into her ears; and over all, the soft mantle of the coming darkness was falling gently, but quickly.

Something like a steam pump inside her head was thump, thump, thumping, trying to burst the top of her skull. Great luminous clouds—white, red, blue, yellow—floated before her. The darkness reft itself in twain, and huge fireballs darted from the chasm in the overwhelming invisibility, and danced up and down and across before her eyes. She screamed with wild, unearthly laughter, yet never for an instant did she relax that iron grip on beard and pommel.

Fifty yards—forty—thirty! She still held on. Twenty yards! The shrieking red fiends only sixty yards behind her! And then—and then the gallant mustang ended his career. His heart burst, and down he crashed. Horse and riders were mixed up in a promiscuous heap. At last! the victims were in the clutches of the cruel blood-seekers—or, rather, in another instant they would be, when a stream of lurid light played along the barricade, as the garrison under Hank Potter poured in their first volley, followed by a continuous hail of deadly messengers from their repeating-rifles, which mowed down ponies and riders, so that in the first shock of surprise twenty Apache braves bit the dust.

As the foaming cascade on the mountain-side splits itself upon some sharp crag, so did that whirling avalanche of onrushing ferocity divide before the scathing and unexpected fire of the miners, who had been reinforced by a cavalry

command which had billeted itself at Plummer's for the night, and sweep with howls of disappointed rage to right and left. Night fell on North-west Arizona, and the moon peeped curiously over the eastern ridge to see what all the terrible commotion was about; but it only shone upon a scene of calm after storm, and there was no vestige left of the mad hurricane that had surged by, save the dead bodies of the fallen braves (which would mysteriously disappear before morning) and ponies, and the knot of miners that crowded round the spot where Jim Annersley sat upon the ground, nursing Philossifer Phil's head in her lap, and crying and laughing hysterically, while the blood from his wounded lung oozed slowly from his mouth.

'Philossifer Phil sot out tew bring his new pard tew Plummer's, but it 'pears tew me ez how the new pard hez brought Phil,' remarked Hank Potter. And then, as his eye took in the fuller details of the girl's fair features and long rippling hair, he staggered back in the moonlight, and ejaculated:

'Why, what the tarnal, boys! Durn me if et ain't a woman!'

'A woman!' echoed the rest in surprise, and Phil opened his eyes wearily as he muttered:

'Real grit! you kin bet your gun boots on thet!' and then he relapsed into unconsciousness.

When Philip Marpleson finally awoke to a full sense of what was going on around him, he found himself lying on his own bunk in his own hut. But he was not *all* lying there, for his right arm—the one that had been hopelessly shattered—had been amputated above the elbow by a drunken, broken-down doctor, who had ruined a practice in Chicago and turned adventurer, during a temporary spell of sobriety induced by fear of the Indians. Yet Phil was very content, and very happy in coming back to life. Perhaps it was his philosophy that made him so, or, maybe, it was the sight of the lovely, smiling face with the red scratch on its cheek, that leaned over him, and did him more good than a fully equipped ambulance corps and a first-class hospital could have effected.

Phil had awakened in a little oasis of bliss in the desert of his life. It was good and sweet to have the girl, Jim Annersley, flitting about his couch, tending him and watching over him with tender vigilance, lest he should, by some exertion, bring on a bout of hemorrhage; to hear her soft, silvery voice; to feel her presence near him—and he wondered how long it would last. Those were halcyon-days for the philosopher; yet, as they sped along like a happy dream that is dreamed, a shadow fell upon his face, and gathered and gathered, so that one day the girl asked him:

'What are you worrying about, Mr Marpleson?'

And Phil replied bluntly:

'Molasses.'

The girl laughed a catchy little laugh.

'Plummer's ain't no place fur you, miss,' he continued painfully, thinking all the while of the red-haired Irish grocery man. 'Thar's Ilaliday's pile buried in the corner thar! You jest dig it up an' git back to Cruz by the fust wagon wot brings supplies. Then you kin git the stage thar an' streak it back to Carville.'

'But—but, I'm afraid Plummer's will be no

place for you either, Mr Marpleson,' she returned, glancing compassionately at the bandaged stump.

'I reckon I'll worry along somehow,' he replied hastily, as though he wished to get over a disagreeable business as quickly as possible. 'I'm afear'd ef you don't git back, they'll fire you—I mean, they'll git another clerk at the store!'

'Oh, I guess they won't do that,' laughed Jim. 'They'll hardly dare to "fire" the boss, and that's just what I am. The store's mine, Mr Marpleson. Father left me the whole business when he died.'

'Snakes! you don't say!' murmured the sick man, and then he breathed hard and looked at the roof above his head for five minutes. He might have looked at it longer, because, I think, he saw the picture of a red-haired Irish grocery man there weighing out molasses, had not Jim Annersley sat down by his bedside and commenced to play nervously with the edge of the blanket. She seemed to be very much interested in the edge of that blanket—it was stitched with red, and had a blue border and a darn on it—for she dropped her eyelids, and fixed her gaze steadfastly on it as she whispered tremulously:

'You—you said on that night—I don't think you'll remember it, but you did—you said I was "real grit."'

'I dunno what sorter hogwash I ladled out *then*, 'cos I reckon I warn't quite myself; but what I says *now* ez thet you air the grittiest, bulliest, rattiest gal thet ever drawed breath—thar!'

'And—and you said'—the edge of the blanket required a little closer attention here, which would account for the way in which the hot colour surged to her face and neck—'you said in your letter thet—that if I was "real grit" and "purty hefty," you'd—you'd have me for your pard!'

'You ain't playin' it off on me, miss?' Phil inquired anxiously, hardly believing his ears. Yet he required no answer to his query, for the girl had buried her face in her hands, and was sobbing with modest shame for her boldness.

'Jim!' said the philosopher softly.

'Phil!'

'Put it thar!'

And she put it there—right on his lips, with her arms round his neck, and her moist blue eyes pouring their streams of love into his.

'Gosh!' exclaimed Philossifer Phil from the bottom of his big heart; 'I've struck it rich at last! And, Jim, no Irish need apply!'

ROUGH-RIDING.

'How does it feel to ride a buckjumper?'

Many years ago we asked this question of a well-known rough-rider, on first meeting him.

'You'll be surprised when you try,' was the reply. 'The smash of his hoofs on the ground is what you'll notice principally. It comes like a pistol-shot, and it's enough to make your jaws crack. Another thing is that his head goes out of sight altogether, between his fore-legs. But the real job is when he goes in for side work, and tries to catch his tail, like a young dog. Even if you stick to him then, you're lucky if he doesn't work the saddle over his head.'

'You don't mean without breaking the girths?' we exclaimed.

'Certainly,' he replied. 'Ask any man who has broken wild horses whether a bad one can't "jump out of the saddle." If you can sit him till the third "buck," you are supposed to be able to sit him; but let me say that you don't always get to the third.'

As we have sat (and also been thrown by) buck-jumpers since then, we can endorse unreservedly every word of this authority on the subject. To say one is surprised is a mild term to employ. On our first attempt, our chief astonishment was at the infinitesimal time it took to reach the ground after the horse began to 'go to work.'

Many who know anything of riding, in this (so-called) horse-loving nation of ours, will think they have ridden a 'buck' often, and require no information on the subject. Be assured, however, reader, that it is an exceedingly rare thing. We have known men who have broken horses on colonial cattle-stations for twenty years, and have never seen a real buckjumper.

A reason for this is the fact, which all do not know, that only horses of certain strains *can* 'buck.' A vicious horse may rear and fall back on his rider, or he may roll on the ground and proceed to devour him—and these habits are no doubt unpleasant and not to be recommended (in a child's pony, for instance); but if he hasn't got the right breed, he will never 'buck.'

One of the innumerable popular delusions about horses is that buckjumpers which are exhibited in public, like Buffalo Bill's, for instance, have received careful training in the art. Any one who has broken horses will know that in their wild state they require no instruction whatever in this direction. The whole art of breaking consists in teaching them *not* to 'buck.' This is why our colonies supply the buckjumpers of the world. Time there is money, and hands cannot long be spared for breaking. The two-year-old is driven into the yard (having possibly never seen a man before), roped up, cast, and while he is on the ground a saddle and bridle are worked on to him. A rough-rider is put up, he drives the spurs well home, and there you have an inveterate buckjumper for life.

Put yourself in the horse's place and you will hardly wonder at it. He is by nature morbidly nervous, and man is a thing almost unknown till now. The horrid black object on his back is to him the foul fiend incarnate, and the first step in breaking he supposes to be the final dissolution of the universe.

In Australia it used to be no uncommon thing that a man who had a colt to sell got him broken in two hours before the sale! The whole process cost just ten shillings.

The rough-rider was hoisted up, and the colt went through his *repertoire* of contortions, being occasionally lashed from behind with a stock whip, to insure all traces of vice being thoroughly eradicated. By the time of the sale he was naturally so exhausted that all attempts at 'playing up' were (for the time being, of course) out of the question. The mark of the saddle was pointed out as proof positive that he could be ridden, and he changed hands, guaranteed thoroughly quiet and broken to saddle.

Unless he was a first-class rider, the experience of the buyer, on mounting him next day, would be both unexpected and exhilarating.

Who are the best riders in the world? The Australians say they are, and they are supported by most competent judges. South Americans claim to be as good, and they are certainly good riders, but not so scientific. They are satisfied if they can stick on, and even resort to putting the spurs between the girths for a 'foot-hold.' Australians would scorn such means. If good riders, they will sit correctly even under the most difficult circumstances.

Can buckjumping be cured? It cannot, or rather we should modify that statement by saying that it can. It cannot, because bucking is an ingrained vice, the result of fear, and once learned is never forgotten. It can, like all other vices, be subdued by steady work and careful handling; but recollect that, once these are left off, it may return. At all events, such a 'reformed' animal can never be ridden by a lady.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

It is a bad thing for a soldier not to have confidence in the weapons supplied to him, and this unfortunately was the case with many of our own men during the Chitral campaign, when they noted that the wounds inflicted by the Lee-Metford rifle bullet were not serious enough to stop a charge of fanatical natives. One of these tribesmen actually received six bullet-wounds and made a good recovery from them later on in hospital, and the enemy were reported to have known well that the new weapon was not half so deadly as the old Martini-Henry, with which our native Indian soldiers are still armed. It was eventually found that the fault was not with the rifle but with the bullet, and, after numerous experiments, a new projectile, the invention of Captain Bertie-Clay, R.A., is found to give the best results—that is, the worst results for any unfortunate enemy against whom it may be employed. The new bullet, which consists of lead encased in a thin nickel shell, was tried in December last at the annual rifle meeting at Meerut, so that both officers and men should become acquainted with its powers. More than this, the new bullet was subjected to all kinds of tests with different kinds of billets, from bags of sand to dead sheep, so that the soldiers could see for themselves the destruction it was capable of achieving. Colonel Hill, Assistant-adjutant-general for Musketry, in lecturing upon the new bullet, said that, from experiments he had made, he had no hesitation in declaring that he would rather be hit by two Martini-Henry bullets than one of these new ones. Armed with the Lee-Metford rifle and the modified bullet, he considered 'the British soldier will have in his hands the best rifle and the most efficient bullet in the world.'

In the course of a lecture on 'Recent Polar Exploration,' Mr A. Montefiore Brice, in referring to the recent Jackson-Harmsworth expedition, to which he acted as secretary, said that Mr Jackson was not a believer in lime-juice or vegetables as preventives of scurvy. The Eskimo seemed to be of the same opinion, for they consumed neither, but ate plenty of fresh meat, never fully cooked, and often raw. The men of the Jackson-Harms-

worth expedition followed the same course, and during the entire three years of their pilgrimage not one of them exhibited the slightest symptoms of scurvy.

We have already alluded to Mr Cuning Macdonald's intention to introduce a bill during the present session of parliament dealing with the important question of floating derelicts, and giving powers to search for these dangers of the deep, and to tow them into port or destroy them, as may be thought best, in the same manner as the American legislature has caused to be done for several years past. Mr Macdonald's arguments for this useful reform are much strengthened by the terrible accident to the British steam-ship *Glendower*, which, when bound from New York to Hamburg, and travelling at full speed in mid-Atlantic, ran full-tilt into one of those floating death-traps and narrowly escaped destruction. A hole five feet square was knocked in the vessel's bow, luckily above the water-line; but through this immense wound volumes of water were received, so that in a few minutes the fore-castle was full. A temporary shield was at length bolted over the aperture and the water reduced by pumping, but the next night a heavy sea carried the shield away, and the awful danger was renewed. After much trouble, a pad was put into the hole and secured with chains, and the vessel, whose captain remained on the bridge in terrible weather for ten consecutive days and nights, eventually reached Queenstown without loss of life. It is fair to assume that a large proportion of the ships which never reach port, and which are posted at Lloyd's as missing, have come to grief through the same kind of accident as that which so nearly wrecked the *Glendower*.

Mr F. E. Ives, whose *Photochromoscope* was fully described in our pages some months ago, has made several minor improvements in this instrument for showing photographs endowed with the colours of nature, and he now calls it the *Krömsköp*. As we have before pointed out, there is nothing tangible about these pictures. By a clever arrangement of screens and six negatives taken under coloured light, we have an image formed which is in the nature of an optical illusion, and a very beautiful one too. In the meantime Mr Benetto of Newquay, Cornwall, has, he states, gone far beyond Mr Ives in the production of coloured photographs, for he has solved the problem completely, and can take coloured photographs by light agency alone, and without the help of pigments. The process, he informs us, is simpler than the printing of an ordinary photograph, and the only reason that he does not at once make it public is, that it is necessary to protect all possible applications of the method. For the thing is so simple that, were it at once divulged, sharp practitioners would rush to the patent office to cover all kinds of applications of the process, to the prejudice of the original inventor.

In no situation is a good light so welcome as it is in a railway carriage, under which conditions one can so happily relieve the tedium of a long journey by reading. But good railway lamps are the exception rather than the rule, and many railway companies give their patrons nothing better than miserable oil lamps. The London and North-western Railway, always to the fore in any improvement for the comfort of their

passengers, are now trying compressed acetylene gas experimentally for lighting the carriages on their extensive system. The light given is about fifteen times that possible with ordinary coal-gas burned at the same rate, and it will be a great boon to passengers if it be found that the scheme is in other respects satisfactory.

When will the day come, we wonder, when our street-cab system shall be freed from the perplexities which have ever surrounded it. Caricatures of ancient date show us that disputes with cabmen were rife long before the establishment of those comic journals which since have so often held cabby and his fare up to ridicule. It seems incomprehensible that one means at least of putting a stop to abusive extortion on the part of cabby, and preventing him at the same time from losing by erroneous ideas of distance on the part of his customers, has not long ago been adopted. It would be an extremely simple matter to affix to each cab a dial which should show the exact distance run, and, if necessary, the fare chargeable. Such a dial should be easily put back to zero, so as to start fair for every passenger. Bicycle-riders have such an indicator fixed to their machines, and it is still more necessary that a vehicle which plies for hire should be similarly furnished. The system would soon be appreciated by the cabmen as well as by their customers, for many ladies would take a cab where they now walk, if they were quite sure that there would be no dispute, or rather wrangle, about the distance run and the fare payable.

According to a doctor who writes to one of the American medical papers, snuff-taking is a very common and harmful habit, and is especially in vogue in the Southern States. Strange as it may appear, 'by far the greater consumption of this article (snuff) is by the women and girls, mothers and daughters rivalling one another in the consumption of this noxious article.' Many women are said to consume as much as a bottle of snuff per week, but the size of the bottle is not stated, the quantity being probably well understood by American readers. The effects of the habit are terrible; nausea, chronic torpidity of the liver, insomnia, imperfect digestion, impaired eyesight, and failure of the mental powers being some of the symptoms named. Moreover, the entire system is said to be impregnated with the poisonous influence and odour, even to the breath and skin. It is thus essentially a dirty habit, this snuff-taking, and the very thought that it is so will do more than anything else to deter most women from adopting it.

A remarkable accident took place recently at Calais. A large boiler was being carried through the streets upon a trolley drawn by a team of sixteen horses, when the metallic mass came into contact with some overhead electric-light wires and broke them. These broken wires caught on to the boiler and the framework of the truck, with the result that the current was conveyed to the horses and knocked them all senseless, some of them being killed. The men in attendance also received severe shocks.

A certain café in Berlin is furnished with automatic lunch counters, which represent the most complete development of the penny-in-the-slot principle which has been yet attempted, although it is said that various restaurants in

Germany are adopting the same system. Instead of the usual counter served by barmaids or waiters, there is a row of handsome cabinet-like structures, each with a shelf about three feet above the floor. Above this shelf are various taps, from each of which a particular drink may be obtained when the necessary coin is placed in the slit associated with it. In summer these drinks are iced, and in winter they are heated. Any customer may provide himself with a clean glass by holding the vessel for a moment over a spraying apparatus; and should he require food, he can take his choice of sandwiches, cakes, &c., which are also procurable by dropping a coin into a slot. The sandwiches, for example, are contained in a revolving dish having many compartments, and a dropped coin will bring one of these within command of the customer's hand.

There is found in the Mediterranean and in adjacent seas a starfish which has been noted to have when young six arms, whilst the adults only have five, and sometimes three of these arms are much smaller than the others. Dr E. von Marenzeller has observed that the arms are actually thrown off, a not uncommon custom of echinoderms, while the disc that remains will often bud out fresh arms. The reason for this self-division he gives as follows: 'The animals are affected by a certain parasite called *Mysostoma*, which, passing in at the mouth, takes up its quarters in the blind extensions of the stomach that pass into the arms. Here it grows, and occasions such inconvenience to its host that the latter takes the heroic course of getting rid of the arm in which the parasite resides. At first the creature is endowed with its full complement of arms, and should parasites get into them all, they will all in turn be dispensed with and regrown; but in most cases only five are thus renewed, and occasionally only three.'

The climbing of high mountains, taken up as a form of sport, dates only from the year 1786, when Mont Blanc was conquered by two intrepid mountaineers. Since that date peak after peak fell to adventurous spirits, until no more worlds of the kind remained in Europe to conquer. So the mountaineers took their alpenstocks farther afield, and scaled the vast heights offered by the Himalayas, the Andes, and other ranges which push their peaks far beyond the snow-line. The highest recorded climb until the other day was 21,000 feet, almost exactly four miles; but news has now been received to the effect that the summit of Aconcagua, the highest mountain in South America, was reached on January 14th, by Zurbriggen, a well-known Swiss guide, in company with Mr Fitzgerald. The actual height attained was 24,000 feet. Mr Fitzgerald was forced to turn back by sickness before the summit was actually reached, but probably by the time these lines are in print he will have succeeded in his determination to conquer the peak. It is this sickness, the result of the highly rarefied condition of the air at high altitudes, which has over and over again proved the greatest obstacle to mountaineers, and placed a limit upon their wanderings. Unless means be discovered to counteract this sickness, it is probable that the highest peaks of Asia, which are from four to five thousand feet higher than Aconcagua, will for ever remain unconquered fortresses.

Professor Vivian B. Lewes, in the course of his recent 'Cantor Lectures' on the use of gas for domestic lighting, utters a useful note of warning on the modern craze for very powerful artificial lights. He believes that some of these are prone to have a very serious effect upon the eyesight, and gives it as his opinion that, in choosing a light by which we are to work, it is an absolute necessity that it should be essentially different from ordinary daylight, and should be as free as possible from those actinic rays which are found in sunlight. Nature has intended our eyes to be used in daylight, and the strain upon the optic nerve should be relieved during the hours of twilight and darkness. But, provided that the artificial light supplied be of a soft character, such as is given by candles and oil lamps or the gas-flame, we can use our eyes without hurting them for some hours after daylight has ceased. If, however, we adopt a light which is rich in violet or ultra-violet rays, fatigue of the optic nerve will begin to make itself manifest in the gradual deterioration of the eyesight. Put into brief, this means that the kind of light most valuable to the photographer is the most harmful which we can adopt for continual use.

Although ships are now built of steel, there are, according to the mercantile shipping list, a number of old wooden vessels still in use, some of them having reached a venerable age. One ship there is which is no less than one hundred and twenty-two years old, while there are seven which have been afloat for more than a century. There are thirteen wooden vessels which are between ninety-five and one hundred years old, and fourteen whose years come between ninety and ninety-five. We fancy that most of these old ships are in the timber trade, and are therefore freighted with a cargo which may become water-logged but can practically never sink. Certain it is that there are many such vessels plying between some of our ports and those of Norway, most of them having a very picturesque appearance.

The contest between shot and armour plates has been a long one, and nearly every one thought, when the Harveyised plate was introduced, that the latter had scored a success which would never be reversed. But quite recently a projectile has been manufactured in America, known as the six-inch Johnson solid shot, which has pierced a ten-inch Harvey plate and twelve inches of oak backing, and has buried itself in the sand beyond practically uninjured in itself. The particular way in which this shot has been made so efficient is very curious and interesting. In the first place, it is, of course, made of the very finest material, but the novel feature about it is, that its conical point is covered with a block of soft steel. This cap preserves the point at the moment of impact, holding the metal together until the hard face of the plate has been pierced. It is supposed, too, that the soft cap is fused by the heat of concussion and acts as a lubricant to the entry of the shot. It is now for the plate-makers to manufacture something which will cope with this new projectile, and so the seesaw game will go on, until our sailors will possibly find it best to dispense with armour altogether, a conclusion at which our soldiers arrived many years ago.

Papyrolith, a new material for covering floors,

the invention of Mr Otto Kraner of Chemnitz, consists of a preparation of paper pulp which is in the form of a powder. This is mixed with water and spread like mortar over stone, cement, wood, or any other material, and when hard is planed smooth. It may be tinted any colour, so as to imitate mosaic, and can be used for ornamental panelling. It is, according to the inventor, non-conductive of heat, elastic, and durable.

A curious illustration of the expanding property of ice is occasionally seen on roadways laid with soft wood blocks, which under constant traffic have become worn and porous. Such blocks, sodden with rain, will on the occurrence of a sharp frost rise in huge blisters from their concrete bed and form elastic cushions, which bend about like india-rubber as vehicles pass over them. The phenomenon is due to the swelling of the ice in the pores of the wood, and is a manifestation of the same power which plays such havoc with our domestic water-pipes.

Mr J. S. Fairfax, president of the Society of Patent Agents, is advocating the formation of a Museum of Patents in connection with the London Patent Office. There is here already a fine technical library and a reading-room, where all the most important technical periodicals may be consulted free of charge on any week-day up to ten o'clock at night. It is proposed that, as various alterations and extensions of the building are in anticipation, it would not be a difficult matter to find room for models, &c. relating to important patented devices, the exhibition of which would be valuable to budding inventors. Mr Fairfax suggests that 'the collection should form an index museum to the very useful classified abridgments of specifications compiled under the direction of the Comptroller-general. If judiciously selected, and with reference to fundamental patents, the examples would indicate the evolution of prevailing ideas along the main thoroughfares of thought, thus guiding the inventor along paths found to be practical, and warning him against repatenting old devices.' The idea is certainly a good one, and it would seem that there would be no difficulty in finding funds for its realisation out of the surplus earnings of a very well-to-do department.

A correspondent (Mr H. W. Bidwell), writing from Uitenhage, Cape of Good Hope, with reference to the article 'Monkeyana' in last year's *Journal*, reminds us that the author took exception to a statement of Professor Brehm, that monkeys are the only animals that will risk their lives to save their own species, and that he invited information on the point regarding dogs. When Mr Bidwell read this article, two instances had just come under his personal observation. He also mentions the story of a very intelligent baboon, which had been trained to do many useful little jobs for its master. He writes: 'In my daughter's garden there is a large circular tank or reservoir. Its cement wall is flush with the ground, and perpendicular, so that no animal falling in could possibly get out, unless the tank be full. One day a bull-terrier named "Rats" went to my daughter, whining and yelping most piteously, and making other signs that he wanted her to follow him. She did so, and he led her to the tank, where there was a fox-terrier named

"Laddie" in the very last stage of exhaustion. He was fished out nearly dead. The most remarkable thing about this is that "Laddie," like many of his breed, is exceedingly quarrelsome, the chief victim of his spitefulness being the good-natured "Rats," who, if he liked, could shake the little tyrant to pieces in a few minutes. But for the sagacity, and, may we not say magnanimity, of "Rats," "Laddie" must have been drowned.

'The second case is that of an Irish setter, "Dash," and a pointer, "Flirt," belonging to another member of my family.

'The pointer "Flirt" has the greatest horror of water, and can never be induced to enter it. The setter takes to water like an otter. These two dogs are having perpetual fights.

' "Flirt" fell into the water one day, and though she managed to keep afloat, she could not approach the shore, but kept revolving horizontally "on her own axis" so to speak, and would certainly have perished had not assistance arrived. "Dash," as soon as he realised the sad plight of "Flirt," plunged in, seized her by the neck, and pushed her ashore. These two instances are authentic, and, I think, will establish your author's contention, and show that dogs are quite as capable of qualifying for the medal of the Humane Society as monkeys.

'As regards monkeys, we have several varieties here. I think the *Cynocephalus* is the most sagacious. We had a remarkably intelligent baboon here a few years ago. He was a giant of his species. His master and trainer had the misfortune to have both his legs cut off in a railway accident, and on his leaving hospital the Cape government gave him a berth as signalman, near the terminus here. He taught this baboon not only to work the signals, but to place the wheels of a little trolley on the line, and then the bed on the wheels. His master would then seat himself on the trolley, and Jackoo would push him along to his house, about 200 yards down the line. He would then detach the pieces of the trolley and clear them off the line. He would also lock the door of the signal-box and take the key to his master. When he died I obtained the body, and sent it to the Albany Museum at Grahamstown, but the taxidermist informed me that the body was too decomposed for preservation. I believe his skeleton has been afforded a place in the Museum. I enclose a photograph of poor Jackoo and his master, showing the former working the railway signals as hundreds of people have seen him.'

AN INCIDENT IN EXCISE LIFE.

'WELL, I think we had better finish No. 6, and that will be enough for to-day.' It was the supervisor who thus replied to my suggestion of giving over for the day. We had been gauging some new vessels at the distillery at Ballylandlord, a small village not many miles from Dublin. It was March, and a late frost was at its maximum severity, rendering the damp interiors of the huge vessels we were measuring rather uncomfortable quarters in such weather; so I readily assented to the supervisor's proposal, and we

descended the ladder into the depths of No. 6 Wash Back, such being its technical and unlovely name. For the information of the uninitiated, I must explain that a distiller's operations are closely surveyed and checked by the Excise officials, whose duty it is to see that all the 'strong waters' are duly debited to the manufacturer at the statutory rate of eleven shillings per proof gallon. For this purpose the principal vessels are gauged or measured, and the results duly tabulated. The particular vessels we were gauging on the afternoon of which I write are used in one of the first processes of distillation, and are known as Wash Backs. They are large vats, generally circular in form. In an extensive distillery they are often of great size, perhaps as much as twenty feet in depth, and fifteen in diameter; they are always covered in, the only outlet besides the supply and discharge pipes being the trap-door, or, as it is styled, the man-door at the top.

Ballylandlord Distillery had recently changed hands, and the new owners had rigged up these new vessels preparatory to starting to work. The working staff of men had not yet been engaged; so with the exception of an odd joiner or carpenter about, there were very few hands at disposal. Hence it was not surprising that as a sort of general utility man we had to fall back on a rather peculiar servitor.

Mike—as he was called—was as deaf as a post, and as taciturn and unreciprocal as the Blarney Stone itself. I suppose he held his post by reason of length of service on the premises; at any rate, whatever occult value lay under his unpromising exterior was not easily discerned. He was one of those few Milesians who do not wear their hearts on their sleeves, one of those few whose countenances require a physiognomist to read them.

His tread, too, was as noiseless as his tongue. Over and over again during the day did I laugh merrily at the many little *contretemps* arising from his slow-wittedness and general impenetrability. Little did I think as I laughed that his deafness was nearly to cost me my life. During the course of the hideous mishap I am about to relate—I shudder even now when I think of it—I could hear my own laugh mocking me, as it were, for my levity.

After innumerable chalkings and measurements, we made an end of No. 6, and as I was both cold and hungry, grateful visions of a comfortable fireside and something to eat put an alacrity into my ascent up the ladder. We went down to the office, and the supervisor, putting on his overcoat, bade me good-evening and left for home. I was preparing to follow his example, when suddenly I remembered that I had left my pocket-book at the bottom of No. 6. Now, as in addition to numerous gauging memoranda it contained several bank-notes, I did not care to leave it till morning, so I hurried up to the 'back-room.' It was now quite deserted save for Mike, who was finishing up his work and moving about with almost noiseless tread. He did not notice me, so I slipped down the ladder into No. 6—a matter of fifteen feet or so. It was now quite dark, and I could not readily lay hands on my missing pocket-book. I was just searching my pockets for a match, when suddenly, as if he had

crept there cautiously, I saw Mike above at the man-door; in an instant he laid hands on the ladder and hauled it up. I made a rush at the retreating ladder and shouted. In vain; it escaped my grasp, and he did not hear me. I shouted, nay I yelled! No answer from Mike. I shout again with renewed energy. Again and again! No response! I hear him depositing the ladder on the rack. My heart sinks within me! I hear him go out. I am doomed to die!—perhaps my last—in this unhealthy dungeon!

After the first shock had worn off, I began to view matters more philosophically. My landlady would perhaps send to the distillery to inquire what kept me; if, on the other hand—and the thought sickened me—she concluded I was at a friend's, I had to force the belief on myself that No. 6 Wash Back was to be my quarters for that night. As the time crept on the horror of my situation began to assert itself. As I have said, there was a severe frost, which materially heightened the discomfort, not to say danger, of my damp prison, to a not over-strong constitution. I was now shuddering with cold, and endeavoured to keep up my caloric by pacing rapidly round my cell. The chill, combined with my hunger, brought on the severe headache peculiar to that unpleasant combination. The horrible darkness, too, added not a little to my discomfort. I was beginning to grow desperate, as each hour went by and failed to bring that succour of which I was unreasonably hopeful. Driven almost to the verge of madness, I shouted again and again, in the vain hope of attracting *somebody's* attention. The hollow echo of my own voice was the only response. I well knew that the gate-keeper was the sole tenant of the premises by night, and as my place of incarceration was situated far from the gate, there was little hope from that quarter.

In my peripatetic wanderings, I knocked my foot against the sinning note-book. In anger, I kicked it aside with childish petulance, and muttered imprecations over it. It must be now at least seven o'clock. I strike a match; my watch shows it ten minutes past that hour. Nearly two hours in this den. I look above me. The slippery walls of my wooden prison rise perpendicularly, at least fifteen feet, to the man-door. I am in the dark once more; not another match. Thoroughly worn out and disheartened, I crouch down and try to sleep. In the silence, I fancy I can hear an odd cart rumbling along the road outside the distillery; occasionally I hear one of the windows shake with a sepulchral rattle, rendering the silence which follows hideously distinct. These rattlings grow more frequent, and I begin to think the wind is rising outside. A change in the weather. Yes. Down comes the rain on the skylight over the back-room, pattering on the glass like shot. A sudden thaw! I think of the skating party I had promised to join on the morrow. No chance of it now, even if I do live out this Walpurgis night. The rain comes down harder than ever, and under the influence of the monotonous music I fall asleep. How long this 'kind nepenthe' lasts me I know not; but I am rudely aroused by a sudden and violent downpour of water into my den. Falling on me like a waterspout, it drenches me to the skin. What can it be? In a second I compre-

hend the situation. The large hose has been left hanging over the trap-door: the cock of the supply tank outside the building has been carelessly left open during the frost, and the thaw has produced my unwelcome shower-bath. Cruel fate! I am to be drowned like a rat! True, I can swim, but, handicapped dreadfully as I am with cold and prostration, how can I manage to keep up until the water reaches the trap-door? The vat is filling rapidly. Already I am up to my knees! Cold is no word for it. However, as I am by this time quite deadened to sensation, I take little notice of it.

After all, my seeming destroyer may set me free, even if in a half-dead condition. The water is rising rapidly, but not half energetically enough for my impatience. To reserve my strength, I delay swimming until the last possible moment. Now for the struggle of swimmer *versus* water! I begin paddling round my compulsory bath, taking it as easy as I can. If I can only manage to keep up long enough, I will, after all, escape imprisonment by help of the enemy.

The water must now be at least nine feet deep. Good! I am now only about six feet from the coveted trap-door. Luckily this vat is a narrow one and fills quickly, otherwise there would be little hope for me. Suddenly my attention is riveted by an alarming sound or rather subsidence of sound.

The waterspout above me is diminishing in volume. I try to chase away the idea as a delusion. A new horror! I am going to be left barely within reach of deliverance! The water slackens slowly but surely, and at length dwindles down to a mere dribble. My heart faints within me. In despair I make a frantic rush out of the water hoping to grasp the edge of the trap-door. My hand rebounds from the smooth perpendicular side of the vat. Nothing for me now but grim death. The horrors of this night have quite hardened me, and I view my situation with stoical equanimity. There is not much more life left in me, so, thank God, I will have the less torture. Yet strange to say, with my forebodings alternates a hope, vain as I inwardly know it to be, that rescue will yet come from *some* quarter. My whole frame is numbed sufficiently already; but now to my alarm I begin to feel an indescribable weariness in my legs. With vain optimism I try to hide from myself the fact that cramp is insidiously but tenaciously grasping me. Yes, I am going to die. A gradual stupor is coming over me. Several times I unconsciously leave off supporting myself and am roused by hearing the water gurgling in my ears. Drowning is often said to be a pleasant death. To one who *can* swim it is horrible! Your mental agony is intensified by feeling yourself succumb to a hitherto conquered element, which now seems to sing in triumph at your defeat.

I nerved myself for a final five minutes—for that was as long as I felt I could keep up. Gradually my strength oozes out as it were. My brain begins to whirl. I fancy I see lights and hear voices. I rally my wavering senses. I look above. Rescue at last! Thank God! More dead than alive I am dragged out and carried home wrapped in blankets, amid the loud cries and lamentations of my good-hearted Irish land-

lady, who thought me dead. I remembered nothing more after I was put to bed. Delirium seized me, and I lay between life and death over a week.

When I became conscious I found Mr B—, a brother officer, sitting by my bedside. He had nursed me like a child all the while. When I gradually acquired strength I learned from him how my rescue came about. It seemed he had occasion to go down to the distillery office on that eventful night, about the time that I was beginning to give up all hope. Seeing my hat and overcoat hanging in the office, he suspected there was something wrong, that perhaps I had had a fall or something equally serious.

On inquiry of the gate-keeper, that functionary said that he did not remember me going out that afternoon. This heightened the suspicions of my friend, so he took a lamp and made a flying survey of the premises.

When he approached my 'Hydropathic' (very little 'cure' and a lot of 'kill' about that one) he heard the splashing of water. Need I tell the reader the cause?

As for poor Mike, when he heard—or was made to understand—how he had nearly cost me my life—the poor fellow, I was told, actually exhibited emotion and implored my pardon by proxy. The inhabitants of Ballylandlord, however, were not so easily appeased as I was; bitter feelings were cherished against the unfortunate man for his cruelty—they swore it was wilful—to the young Saxon.

Although this happened some years ago, I shudder when I even think of it, especially on the anniversary of my night spent in No. 6 Wash Back.

SONNET.

Our yesterdays enthral our morrows still,

By chains no rust of time can wear away,

That with their iron and persistent sway

Serve purposes undreamed of to fulfil

And wake up echoes of the good and ill

In mournful cadence, or a rhythm gay.

Ofttimes what fateful sequences are they

Which follow trifling acts of sudden will!

Small streams grow broader as they onward wind,--

To reach at last the ever-rolling sea;

Hark back through memory's labyrinth, and we find

Small accidents--if accidents there be--

Had power our future years to free or bind,

And be the factors of our destiny!

CAMILLA CROSLAND.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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THE TAPESTRIES OF ALTRANA:

A STORY. BY G. C. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM,

AUTHOR OF 'SANTA TERESA: HER LIFE AND TIMES.'

CHAPTER I.

Not often did any one from the world outside set foot in the little town of Altrana, unless a commercial traveller occasionally, cursing his fate, and hastening to conclude his business and be gone. There was nothing indeed to bring any one there. Extreme necessity alone could induce a person in his senses to undertake full forty miles of rough hill tracks on the back of a spavined mule, the only means of transit if one excepts a jolting cart which every week left Altrana with goods, and an occasional passenger for the capital of the province, generally making its return journey empty. One day, however, the cart, departing from its traditions, brought a passenger, and that passenger a stranger. He arrived at about five of the afternoon, and was set down before the posada of Juan María, the muleteer. Not long afterwards he was seen coming out of the low-browed gateway, and it was remarked that he made his way straight to the 'Palace.' As his footsteps echoed through the streets, the women who sat sewing at the doors of their houses laid down their work to stare after him, so unusual a circumstance was it, this advent of an unknown person in the rarely disturbed atmosphere of their medieval town. The boys playing at the 'pelota' in the plaza as he passed played no more that afternoon, but quickly forming a guard—not precisely one of honour—brought up the rear.

Such a stranger could have attracted no attention in any other place but a Spanish country town, so entirely colourless and neutral his aspect. He was a middle-aged man about fifty; his clothes, too large for him, hung loosely about his limbs; his gait was shambling and undecided; his face was gentle and placid, as if hurry and

emotion were unknown to it; and time, and disillusion perhaps combined, seemed to have stamped on it an amiable, if deprecating, resignation to life.

And yet, though his dress was that of a townsman, the keen-eyed, critical-tongued women in the doorways decreed he was not a gentleman. The undefinable shuffle and a certain humility which swathed his whole aspect and manner were against any such assumption.

Neither was he an artist; for an artist standing for the first time before the feudal palace of the great Dukes of Altrana, celebrated not only for its grim antiquity, but for its historical associations—had not Philip II. danced there with the first Duchess of Altrana, then a child of thirteen, on the occasion of her wedding with his favourite?—would have taken a more critical look than the merely perfunctory, passive gaze bestowed on it by the stranger as he entered the great square gateway, over which hung the mouldering coats of arms of the Dukes of Altrana.

Evidently the stern old fortress, the scene of so many dramas, said nothing to him, or if it did, he did not show it. The granite staircase which stood at the end of the grass-grown court of honour, the thousand quaint details of architecture, the carved wooden corbels, the wrought-iron work left him unmoved. An artist, a skilled craftsman even, would have lingered for a moment to contemplate them, to endeavour to penetrate the secret of their beauty; the poet and the dreamer to people the empty shell, deserted and abandoned, with all the strange drama of the life that had once flitted through it; to forge for himself anew the strange scenes with which history had associated it, or in the depths

of his own fancy, life tragedies even more intense than those of history.

Not so the stranger. He made his way straight to the steward's office, situated on one side of the courtyard. The steward, who was an Andaluz, administered the scattered, immense, and unprofitable lands which now belonged to the last Duchess of Altrana, a lady who made the best of life in a foreign watering-place.

'I am an antiquary,' he said to the steward, who looked up amazed at the entrance of a stranger, after a few preambulatory phrases of self-introduction, 'an antiquary from Madrid.' Here he looked up vaguely and benevolently into the cross-beams, festooned with spiders' webs, which lined the roof. 'Perhaps you can tell me where I might meet with any pieces of silk or tapestry. I am willing to give a good price for them—in moderation, of course. You know,' he continued, interrupting the steward's impatient gesture of negation, 'that the first Duke of Altrana peopled this town with Moors from Valencia early in Philip II.'s reign. He also brought over weavers from Flanders. The silks, brocades, tapestries, and velvets woven here were the finest in all Spain, I have even heard it said, the finest in Europe. I have seen some that came from these looms myself. Now it is impossible but that some vestiges of these should still lie buried in the town. Of course, nowadays, these things are worth little, but some people like them because, I suppose, on account of their age and dilapidated condition, they can be got for less than new ones. I myself have little fancy for them, but still, finding myself by chance in the town, and having nothing to do, it occurred to me to make the inquiry.'

'Your Grace's name?' said the steward.

'Baldomero Sanchez, at your service.'

'And mine, Rufino Perez, for whatever I can serve you in.'

Now the steward was an Andaluz, black-haired, black-eyed, olive-skinned, and a thorough rogue, besides which he was very far from being a fool. Although the professional antiquary was then all but unknown in remote Spanish country towns, still the very fact that what he had hitherto looked upon as old rubbish only fit for the fire should have a market at all, showed him that it must, in what he called the 'Corte,' be of greater value than what Don Baldomero represented. There was a profit to be made somewhere. Who made it? Why, the middleman, of course, represented in this case by Don Baldomero. Now the steward prided himself on being very sharp—*may listo*. Don Baldomero evidently knew the value of what he was a daily dealer in. The steward, on the contrary, did not, nor had he the slightest notion. It flashed through his brain to make use of Baldomero's superior knowledge, to show him all the old furniture, hangings, &c., which were stored in heaps in the state apartments above the staircase of honour. He would watch him closely, and pay particular attention to the objects he seemed to fancy most. And then he saw a vision of carts being laden with the things from the 'Palace,' on their way to Madrid, and unconsciously his hand made its way to his pocket, where he already felt the golden pieces gliding gently through his fingers. His eyes glittered as he said that he thought he could find some old

things such as Don Baldomero described lying about somewhere; some old silks and embroideries, some furniture, too, that there was no use for now. But here covetousness was overcome by apathy. It was late in the afternoon and they were troublesome to get at. The doors of the state apartments would have to be unlocked, and they had not been unlocked for two years or more. Perhaps a locksmith would be needed. And then it was not too safe; the last time he was in them the flooring showed signs of giving way. He did not mention that for years the heaviest items in his accounts to the Duchess were the repairs to the 'Palace.' And, indeed, just now he was engaged—he did not say that it was at the Tertulia which met every evening at the apothecary's shop. 'To-morrow,' he said, 'would be better—to-morrow be it, at ten if God wills.'

It was growing towards sunset when the antiquary, thus dismissed, made his way to the church. It was a lovely evening in early June, mild and balmy. The atmosphere was suffused with golden atoms which tinged everything with amber. The swallows twittered over the red-tiled roofs as he lifted the heavy curtain, and stepped over the threshold into the twilight gloom of the famous Collegiate Church of Altrana. The red light of the lamp which swung before the high altar flickered vaguely in the penumbra. Behind it, the life-like figures of the retablo loomed waveringly from the darkness. As his eyes grew accustomed to the obscurity, the vast expanse of the cold vault-like aisles and the choir, as large and as imposing as that of a cathedral, became clearer and clearer, colder and clearer, as if they reflected from within themselves the light they had absorbed during centuries of summer days, storing it for use in the dimness of the solitary evenings. Here and there tapestries darkened with black blotches of shadow the whitewashed walls. Here and there a glint of the red gold of carved frames showed where was a dusky oil painting. Tattered banners and pennons dangled from the roof, limp and dragged. The whole place was full of a sentiment of magnificence and abandonment, of grandeur creeping into poverty and decay. Every oil-painting, every tapestry around the walls were the princely and invaluable gifts of the great Duke of Altrana, the first of that title, Philip II.'s powerful court favourite, who had loaded the church he founded with treasures so priceless that it was at one time second to none in all Spain for the gorgeousness of its ceremonies and the wonders of its sacristy.

At the time I write of, Spain had not so fully awakened to the glory of her national antiquities as she has done since, and the Collegiate Church of Altrana, lying on the road to nowhere, was one of the few churches in Spain which had escaped the depredations of the French, and one of the few churches which owed to its decrepitude the oblivion into which it had fallen.

A little old man was shutting up for the night, and the sound as he locked a door or moved a bench echoed dully through the empty nave—a little old man, withered and gnarled, and with that semi-ecclesiastical, demure air peculiar to people who depend on the Church for their livelihood, and whose whole life is spent in contact

with it. The antiquary went and stood beside him. The little old man took no notice, and imperturbably continued the mechanical moving about of the benches. The antiquary coughed. 'Tis a fine church, friend,' he said. This time the sacristan looked up. The voice was strange to him. He shaded his eyes with his hand, as if that would help to concentrate the waning light on Don Baldomero's face and figure. There was something effaced and negative in his aspect that satisfied his scrutiny. 'Ay, ay, a fine church,' he said, going on with his work. 'A stranger! eh? from the court, perhaps? Ay, I thought as much. Yes, 'tis a fine church! They tell me there are finer ones in Spain, but none so rich as this, señor; none so rich as this.'

The antiquary smiled. 'Well, as to that,' he said, 'I don't know! What about Toledo and Compostella, and, to go no farther, Cuenca?'

'Pshaw, Cuenca!' said the old man, with a gesture of angry contempt. 'Why, when the bishop was here at our last confirmation, and I told him to his face that our church here was finer than his cathedral, he laughed and said: "Quite right, José! quite right; the only thing it wants is a bishop." Now I've seen Cuenca myself; my first cousin is a beadle there; but there are more treasures here than you can see in Cuenca, friend, and I've heard people say so who know. Pshaw! talk to me of Cuenca,' he added with growing irritation; 'why, if it was light now, I would show you things that would make your eyes start out of your head. Jewels! *Dios mio*, such jewels; why, the rubies on the Virgin's mantle are worth a king's ransom alone! The metropolitan church itself can show nothing like them. You see the choir there, a silent place it is to-day! Well, señor, I have heard my grandfather say that he remembers the time when forty-five canons sat in it, and people came from far and near to the festivals just as if it were a cathedral. And then the tapestry!'

Swiftly but quietly the antiquary checked the old man's rhetoric. 'Tapestry, you said, friend?'

'Yes, tapestry,' the old man went on impatiently; 'and why not? I can tell you that, once upon a time, these walls were hung from floor to ceiling with tapestry. I have heard say 'tis the finest in Spain, and is very old. The Dean had it all moved into the Chapter House above, when the church was whitewashed. I was a little lad, but well do I remember (my father was sacristan then) playing about in the church whilst it was being taken down, and *por mas señas*, the workmen tore it off the walls and made ugly rents in it, and for weeks afterwards my mother and the barber's wife, Tia Blasa, who was accounted the best needlewoman in Altrana, sat at their doors mending them in the sun. I can point out my mother's mending to this day on some of them for all the sixty years that have gone since they bore her to her grave (may her soul rest in peace!) But it is too late now,' he said, 'to see anything. To-morrow with the light, may be—— Stay! I will show them to you now, so that you may see I am not lying. Wait a moment until I step into the sacristy for my lantern.'

When he reappeared with the lantern, he took the end of a wax taper that had burned deep down into the sconce, from the candelabra standing on

the high altar. He lit it at his lantern, and handed it to Baldomero; then opening a door at the farther end of the aisle, the two mounted a narrow spiral staircase which wound round and round until it stopped before a sort of stone landing or platform facing a carved door of cedar wood. The sacristan unlocked this door. As it swung back heavily on its hinges, the sound was echoed in the silence, and the dust flew from the walls and out of invisible corners. The light from the lantern gleamed red through the dusky chamber as the sacristan related how it had been once the Chapter House when Altrana possessed the richest Collegiate Chapter in Spain. Above the dais, opposite to where they stood, hung the picture of a cardinal prince of the church, the illegitimate son of the first Duke of Altrana, whose bar sinister was no bar to the highest dignities in the church. The antiquary looked with some interest, holding the taper well above his head, at the dark pale face, haughtily refined and spiritually supercilious, of the last direct descendant of the greatest family in Spain; with still more interest at the carved chair covered with faded velvet, which stood on the dais beneath the picture, shadowed by a canopy also of velvet.

Besides the cardinal's hat and crossed keys, the chair as well as the canopy bore the arms of the Dukes of Altrana embroidered in embossed gold and seed pearls. Below the dais was a table so magnificent and costly that it took the antiquary's breath away. He gasped when he turned to the hangings on the walls. He had not noticed them at first, owing to the darkness of their surface, which had projected first on his perceptions the more positive gleams reflected from the picture, the velvets, and the embroideries. At the sight of so much unexpected splendour he had for the moment forgotten what it was he had come to see.

At a glance he saw that what he had passed over without notice were genuine fifteenth-century tapestries; and as he drank in more and more of their details by the uncertain light of the taper, he realised that he was looking upon some of the finest, if not the very finest, historical tapestries it had ever been his lot to see. The old man stood silent, lantern in hand, following the emotions that passed over the antiquary's face until he triumphed in this final triumphant crescendo. Each piece was different. The subject of one of them, there could be no doubt, was the famous taking of Granada. Don Baldomero, in a suppressed ecstasy of excitement, passed the wax taper up and down, and as he moved it, it shone on turbaned heads, and glittered on the gold and silver helmets of the warriors streaming in procession out of battlemented walls, on pennons waving, on all the pomp and circumstance of medieval warfare. The faces bore traces of having been done from life; the foremost figures, which subordinated the seething crowd, were undoubtedly those of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic. With tremulous hand he sought and carefully examined a certain spot on the lower border for the certain signs and marks which would either confirm or destroy his hypothesis. He could scarcely believe his eyes when he discovered the mystic signs, the date 1493—one year after the siege, the authentication, the guarantee, the seal of this tremendous and glorious tapestry docu-

ment. The piece beside it was different, but here again the faces, the figures, were evidently contemporary portraits. Those fair ladies—eternally fair—gazing out of the faded background, their long robes trailing over the green sward embroidered with carnations, lilies, and daisies, had once formed part of the court of the Catholic queen. It too bore the same unmistakable marks of authenticity that he had sought for in the last.

'Ay, ay! So old Tio José was not a liar! eh?' said the old sacristan with a complacent chuckle. 'And look at that!' As he spoke he kicked a heavy chest which stood in the corner of the chamber. 'Why, that is full to the brim of them, and takes a dozen men to lift it. Full to the brim of tapestries just as fine as those you have been looking at there, if not finer.'

As he turned, perhaps the better to watch the effect of his words, he swung his lantern full upon Baldomero's face. It might have been the effect of the feeble flame flickering through the shadows—it might have been his own fancy that lit up the stranger's eyes with the strangest expression. It was only for a moment, for the next, they had gained their ordinary, deprecating, and humble gaze. Brief as it was the sacristan observed it, and afterwards it set him thinking. The effect was instantaneous. His manner changed, and observing that it was late, he almost hustled his companion out of the chamber, and locked the door with a clang.

When the two men descended the staircase, night had closed in. The church was dark, not only with the night, but with all the impenetrable mystery of those other centuries of nights it had seen since it was built. The sacristan preceded his companion down the aisle, the keys clinking in his old fingers, the lantern sending a narrow fillet of light amongst the shadows through which they groped.

When the sacristan had bidden his companion farewell on the threshold of the church, he turned the key in the lock, and fastened the heavy bars for the night; ere the grating echo of the falling iron died out of the darkened street, by some unexplained impulse he stood for a moment and watched the receding figure shambling into darkness. Then with his bundle of keys he followed after. Suddenly he stopped. The stranger had paused before a woman standing in a doorway as if to ask a question.

'Eh! Maria, say, what did the stranger say?'

'Nothing, Tio José,' replied the woman in an indifferent tone. 'He wants to see the priest, that is all, and asked if it was far to the parróquia.'

'Thank you, Maria. Good-night!'

'Good-night, Tio José!'

Now if the look he had seen, or fancied he had seen in the stranger's eyes before the tapestries had set him thinking, this question, apparently so innocent, made Tio José distinctly uneasy.

He had been sacristan of the Collegiate Church of Altrana for thirty years and more—as his father and grandfather had been before him—and he had the feeling of an owner for all its invaluable jewels, its priceless tapestries and hangings. When he unlocked the drawers in the wardrobe which lined the sacristy walls, and took out the embroidered copes and rich chasubles which Philip II. had given to the church, his eyes glit-

tered and his hands trembled. No one but himself dared to handle them, so jealous were the old man's affections. This was the link between José and the bishop. The bishop, who was the strongest man in the diocese, was the only priest in it who either would or could wear them; and when the embossed velvets glittering with embroideries and gems hung from his Herculean shoulders, the sacristan stood and admired the tall imposing figure in a mute ecstasy of admiration and veneration, which the bishop voluntarily transferred from the vestments to himself.

'Who was this man, this stranger? What could be his business? What had he, an old fool, business to be prating to one absolutely unknown to him about the church jewels and tapestries? And the man seemed to know something about them too. Why did he examine the texture so closely? Why did he take up the lower border as if he was seeking for something there, and then do the same with the other? What was there on that lower border? To-morrow he would see for himself what it was! And then he suddenly remembered how, about five years ago, another stranger had come to the town, as harmless in appearance as this, and how he, too, had been shown all the glories of the church, and little more than a week after, a jewelled chalice, the most magnificent one in the sacristy, went amissing or was stolen. He for one could swear that it could not have gone astray, as the priest alleged, but that it had been stolen, and in the inmost recesses of his heart he knew the priest had sold it. He had never even dared to say so; he was a poor man, and had his bread to get; but it was his unalterable conviction, and ever since, he had conceived a feeling of rancour against Don Tomás, the more bitter as it had to be concealed. What if the stranger had come on the same unholy errand? And what did this visit to Don Tomás mean? If he had known Don Tomás, he would have said so in the church! What was the meaning of it all?'

He could not sleep for thinking of all these things, and cursing himself for a bragging, meddling fool. When he woke he was morose and gloomy.

'God bless me, man! What ails you?' exclaimed his wife, when he pushed away the wooden bowl which contained their breakfast of garlic soup and sops of bread.

At that moment a thing happened which confirmed his suspicions and increased them to a certainty—a shadow passed through the doorway, and was projected on the floor. It was the priest's woman-servant come for the keys of the church. The sacristan took the keys from the nail and was putting on his hat, when the woman said: 'No, No! You need not come; the orders Don Tomás gave me were that I was to take the keys to him.'

'The keys of the church and without me!' he thought. 'It is impossible; ought I to give them up?'

He glanced a second at the crooked figure of the poor old wrinkled crone, his wife, as she bent over the fire.

The instinct of revolt succumbed to hesitation. With a sigh he bade her hand the keys to the woman: 'What does Don Tomás want the keys for?' he asked. 'This is the first time for thirty

years that he has sent for them without me. I don't know whether I ought to deliver them to you.' The woman shrugged her shoulders, and in that shrug José felt that she had been bidden to hold her tongue, and that the strange request concealed some deeper intention.

SOME HINTS TOWARDS THE FORMATION OF A LIBRARY.

It is perfectly evident from the present condition of the book-trade, brought about mainly by the system of underselling, that the bookseller cannot do so much as he might otherwise do in aiding one's choice in the formation of a library, at least so far as displaying standard books is concerned. He looks at literature from the commercial side, and he is in duty bound to keep the books for which there is a present demand. So if we stumble into the nearest bookseller's shop any day, wishing to see the best hundred books, or even the great classics of literature, we shall be disappointed. True, we may find a selection from the same, as reprinted in some cheap series, but the selection has been made in all probability because of the good terms secured from the publisher, and not because of its being good literature. The bookseller cannot very well help himself. At the present rate of discounts, and we may also say at the present rate of production by publishers, it is not possible to 'stock' a title of the books published, or worth the bookseller's while to buy standard and classical works for which he has only occasional demand. He orders instead such books only when wanted, from the publishers direct or from his wholesale agent. The extent of the trade of this wholesale agent may be gauged by the fact that the distributing or wholesale house of Simpkin & Co., London, has usually one million books on hand.

Mr Shaylor, of Simpkin, Marshall & Co., is of opinion that the alleged decay in bookselling is in the status of booksellers themselves. But the bookbuyer will do much better to take the matter in hand himself, and be able to order distinctly and intelligently what he wants; and as a help to his doing so we furnish some bibliographical aids, which may materially help students and all who are furnishing a library. Not that a library is usually furnished, like a drawing-room or dining-room, after a wholesale fashion, by ordering the different books right out, and placing them on the shelves. Topsy's 'spects it growed' is rather the history of every library and collection of books which has become a pleasure and profit to the owner. 'Let knowledge grow from more to more' is the motto of the book-lover. There is a little history, some anecdote or incident, connected with every volume in the book-lover's library. There is a pathos, too, in going back upon the first volumes which formed the nucleus of the library, and remembering by what act of self-denial they had their place there. One's library grows with the extent of knowledge and requirement.

We place the *living* catalogue first, the intelligent, thinking, experienced brain of the bookseller or librarian, in the list of aids towards forming a library. By his bibliographical skill and taste he can direct his intending

purchaser. He can save an immense deal of trouble, and enable us to make short cuts, and put catalogues in our hands, which will be half the battle. But even with or without his aid, it is as well to know what available helps are at hand. Whitaker's 'Reference Catalogue of Current Literature' is invaluable to begin with. It gives an index to the bulk of the books on sale in the United Kingdom—of course good and bad, like the fish in a trawler's net—with the catalogues and prices of the books issued by the various publishers. There is a corresponding American catalogue to that of Whitaker's. Then we have Low's 'English Catalogue,' which has proved invaluable to the bookseller and librarian and literary man, since its first issue in 1835. Sonnenschein's 'Best Books' (2d ed. 1891) is an excellent aid, and the volumes given are classified, while there is a good index. The supplement issued in 1895 is about as big as the original volume. It is called 'A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literature.' Each affords a guide to over fifty thousand books in every department of science and literature. There are, besides, numerous handbooks, such as 'Books for a Reference Library,' a reprint of the Birmingham Reference Library Lectures, but which have a usefulness far beyond this commercial centre. The subjects include books on law and jurisprudence, legal and constitutional history, Greek and Latin classics, books on Shakespeare, botanical books, and art-books. Then for further reference we have Frederic Harrison's 'Choice of Books,' Baldwin's 'Book-Lover,' the little volume which had its origin in the Best Hundred Books competition compiled by Sir John Lubbock and others; 'Books which have Influenced Me,' containing the experiences of many eminent men as to the books by which their intellectual and moral nature has been built up; Ackland's 'Guide in Choosing Books,' Ireland's 'Book-Lover's Enchiridion,' and Fitzgerald's 'Book-Fancier.' These are all volumes capable of furnishing valuable hints. Thomas Greenwood's book on 'Public Libraries, and Sunday School and Village Libraries,' with its useful list of suitable books and hints on management, should not be forgotten; or Mrs Field's 'Children's Literature in England,' and Bowen's 'Descriptive Catalogue of Historical Novels and Tales.'

The Americans have been very active in the science of bibliography. It is to Mr W. F. Poole and Mr W. J. Fletcher, American librarians, that we are indebted for a very useful and comprehensive index to periodical literature, which, since the issue of the first big volume in 1883, has been kept up to date by repeated supplements. The catalogue of six thousand volumes for a popular library, selected by the American Library Association, and shown at the Columbian Exhibition, was issued at Washington in 1893. When any town adopts the Free Library Act, this catalogue might save the library committee a world of trouble; so should the 'Five Thousand Books; an Easy Guide to the Best Books in Every Department of Reading,' which is a volume selected and classified by the library bureau of the *Ladies' Home Journal*. Other useful American publications in this department are the 'American Catalogue,' with its list of publications, author, and title alphabet, the complement, as we have said, of our Whitaker. Mr F. Leypoldt, a New York publisher, has issued several useful booklets, such as 'Books

of all Time, a Guide for the Purchase of Books ; ' A Reading Diary of Modern Fiction, containing a Representative List of the Novels of the Nineteenth Century, preceded by Suggestive Remarks on Novels and Novel Reading ; ' also ' Books for the Young, a Guide for Parents and Children, ' by C. M. Hewins, of Hartford. The young have been well catered for, as, for example, by the graded and annotated list prepared for the New York State Teachers' Association by George E. Hardy, entitled ' Five Hundred Books for the Young. ' The volume has helpful paragraphs on each book recommended. Then there are also Griswold's ' Descriptive Catalogue of Books for the Young ; ' the ' List of Books for Girls and Women and their Clubs, ' in fiction, biography, and history ; and the ' List of Books recommended for High School Class Libraries by the Michigan Schoolmasters' Club. ' Mr A. Growoll of the *Publisher's Weekly* (59 Duane Street, New York) has issued ' A Bookseller's Library, ' also a volume on the ' Profession of Bookselling ' (1896), with directions for the ' hunting down a book, and what tools to use in doing it ; ' and the Rev. A. E. Dunning has written ' The Sunday School Library. ' Besides these are J. F. Sargent's ' Reading for the Young, ' being a classified and annotated list ; C. F. Richardson's ' Choice of Books ; ' and W. M. Griswold's ' Descriptive List of Novels of American Country Life. '

The publishers and booksellers both in England and America spend many thousands of pounds annually in advertising their publications in magazines, newspapers, and in their own catalogues. The publisher cannot very well help himself, as, unless he takes some means of letting the public know what books he is issuing, by this means and by a staff of travellers waiting upon the booksellers, he would otherwise only be crowding his warehouse with useless waste-paper. The reviewer helps him a little, but probably scarcely so much as that self-conscious individual would imagine. Mr Shaylor says reviews have now less influence than formerly. The publisher is, however, thankful for the advertisement, and sometimes the reader is furnished with a brief bird's-eye view of what the volume under consideration pretends to be. The lists of new books which appear in the *Athenæum*, *Academy*, *Publishers' Circular*, *Bookseller*, *Literary World*, or *Bookman* are all very useful to both publisher and purchaser. A great deal more activity is now shown by the daily press in reviewing new books. Editors have discovered that the public can be as much interested in current literature as in the latest fire or brutal murder or item of political gossip, and those newspapers which give literature its due place in their arrangements have flourished accordingly.

We cannot turn from this part of our subject without mentioning the model bibliographical catalogue issued by Macmillan & Co. in 1891, which gives particulars about all the books issued by this firm from 1843 to 1889, with the number of editions they have passed through. Mr T. Fisher Unwin's ' Good Reading about Many Books, mostly by their Authors, ' is a clever idea well carried out. It is simply a case of all the authors under Mr Fisher Unwin's wing telling us about the book or books which he has issued for them. Not much behind this in interest is

the ' Portraits of Authors and Artists ' who have contributed towards the production of the volumes issued by Cassell & Co., in itself quite a pleasant picture gallery of authors. From all this it is evident the publisher is active enough. Various societies, such as the London Religious Tract Society, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Girls' Friendly Society, Church of England Book Society, the Home Reading Union, and Sunday School Union, also issue useful lists.

With classics from one penny upwards, surely Mr Ruskin's reproach is being wiped away. ' We call ourselves, ' he says, ' a great nation, and yet we are filthy and foolish enough to thumb one another's books out of circulating libraries. ' Such series as Bohn's various libraries, Chambers's ' Miscellany ' and ' Information for the People, ' Cassell's ' National Library, ' Longman's ' Silver Library, ' Macmillan's ' English Men of Letters ' and Globe editions, the Chandos Classics, Minerva Library, and Scott's ' Great Writers ' introduce one to the best of literature at a very cheap rate. A good encyclopædia is a library in itself ; and in a letter to a young man on how to form a library, Dr Robertson Nicoll even recommends ' Chambers's Encyclopædia ' as ' a most valuable and entertaining work. ' Mr Augustine Birrell once came to the mining village of Cowdenbeath, in Fife, and lectured on ' The Wit and Wisdom of the World for a Five-pound Note. ' He began by saying that a very considerable proportion of the wit and wisdom of the world was within reach of his arm. He had brought a selection of books such as he thought came under this category, and placed them before him, both as an object-lesson and as a gift to the miners. Mr Birrell's selection was so sound and good that we give the titles as a variation on Sir John Lubbock's list of the hundred best books, which, by the way, have all been issued at a cheap price by Routledge :

POETRY.—Homer (Pope's translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, two vols.), Dante (Longfellow's translation), Shakespeare (the Globe edition), Milton, Burns, Scott, Wordsworth (Mr Morley's edition), the *Golden Treasury*. HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.—Plutarch's *Lives* (four vols.) ; Gibbon's ' *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* ' (four vols.) ; Macaulay's *History* (three vols.) ; Scott's ' *Tales of a Grandfather* ; ' Carlyle's ' *French Revolution*, ' *Oliver Cromwell*, ' and ' *Past and Present* ; ' Boswell's ' *Life of Dr Johnson* ; ' Lockhart's ' *Life of Burns* and ' *Life of Scott*. ' POLITICS.—Burke's *Selected Works* (two vols.), Bright's *Speeches*, and Bagehot's ' *English Constitution*. ' FICTION.—' *Don Quixote*, ' ' *Pilgrim's Progress*, ' ' *Robinson Crusoe*, ' ' *Vicar of Wakefield*, ' ' *Antiquary*, ' ' *Guy Mannering*, ' ' *Heart of Midlothian*, ' ' *Old Mortality*, ' ' *Waverley*, ' ' *Bride of Lammermoor*. ' MEDITATION AND REFLECTION.—Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, ' *Imitation of Christ*, ' Bacon's *Essays*, Carlyle's ' *Sartor Resartus*. ' MISCELLANEOUS.—William Hazlitt (Selections), Lamb's ' *Essays of Elia*, ' Sheridan's *Plays*, Macaulay's *Essays and Miscellaneous Writings*, Hugh Miller's ' *Schools and Schoolmasters*. ' This is Mr Birrell's selection, governed by experience and literary taste, but of course every reader, in spending five pounds on books, would make his own selection. The drawback in laying down the law regarding the best hundred books is, that although according to

strict canons of taste these may be the best selection, yet they may not be the hundred best books for the individual who purchases them. Every reader of taste and originality, while he selects the world's best books, also chooses some which minister to his own moral and intellectual growth, irrespective of their being famous books. It would be interesting to hear how far this five pounds' worth of wit and wisdom was drawn upon at Cowdenbeath.

Mr G. B. Humphrey, after twenty years' experience with a factory lending library, and fifty with the working-classes, says that in three months 160 solid books were given out as against 352 of fiction, but one man who had got a life of Cromwell read thirty-six pages, and returned it, as he found it too dry.

But after all, as expressed by Carlyle in a letter to a young man on the choice of books (printed in *Chambers's Journal* in 1844, and reproduced in 'Thomas Carlyle, the Story of his Life and Writings:' W. & R. Chambers, Limited), 'it is not by books alone, or by books chiefly, that a man becomes in all points a man,' but in the faithful standing to his duty, whatever that may be. He tells us in another letter of deep rather than widely read men, and of others whose minds have gone to pieces by reading too many books. They are an immense help and solace nevertheless, and never in the history of the world were they more cheap and abundant. So that to remain ignorant in an age of cheap literature and of free libraries is a sin and a crime lying at one's own door.

MY LORD DUKE.*

By E. W. HORNUNG.

CHAPTER XI.—THE NIGHT OF THE TWENTIETH.

A LOOSE chain of fairy lights marked the brink of the lake; another was drawn tight from end to end of the balustrade rimming the terrace; and between the two, incited by champagne and the Hungarian band, the rank and file of the tenantry cut happy capers in the opening eye of the harvest moon.

At one end of the terrace the fire-workers awaited the word to rake and split the still serenity of the heavens; at the other, the fairy footlights picked out the twinkling diamonds and glaring shirt fronts of the house-party, the footmen's gilt buttons and powdered heads; for the men had just come out of the dining-room, and tea was being handed round.

'It is going beautifully—beautifully!' whispered Lady Caroline, swooping down upon the Duke, who had himself made straight for her daughter's side. 'Inside and out, high and low, all are happy; it is one huge success. How could it be other? You make such a charming host! My dear Jack, I congratulate you from my heart; and the occasion must be my excuse for the familiarity.'

'No excuse needed; I like it,' replied the Duke. 'I only wish you'd all call me Jack,' he added, with a sidelong look at Olivia; 'surely we're all pretty much in the same family boat! Well, I'm glad you think it's a success, and I'm glad

I make a decent host; but I shouldn't if I hadn't got the loan of such an excellent hostess, Lady Caroline.'

'You are so sweet!'

'Nay, it's you that's so jolly kind,' laughed Jack. 'The fact is, Lady Caroline, I can get along all right at my own table so long as I don't have to carve—and when I make up my mind to go straight through on cold water. I was sorry not to drink Miss Sellwood's health in anything stronger; but it's better so.'

'So fine of you,' murmured Lady Caroline; 'such a noble example! You can't think how I've admired it in you from the first!'

Yet she looked to see whether his remarks had been overheard. They had not; even Olivia had turned away before they were made, and her mother now followed her example. She was rewarded by seeing the Duke back at the girl's side when next she looked round.

They were standing against the balustrade, a little apart from the rest. They had set their cups upon the broad stone rim. Jack began to stir his tea with the impotent emphasis of one possessed by the inexpressible. But Olivia gave him no assistance; she seemed more interested in the noisy dancers on the sward below the terrace.

'I hope you've had a good time, on the whole,' he began, ineptly enough, at last. 'All this is in your honour, you know!'

'Surely not all,' replied the girl, laughing. 'Still, I don't know when I had such a delightful birthday, and I want to thank you for everything with all my heart.'

'Everything!' laughed Jack nervously. 'I've done nothing at all; why, I didn't even give you a present. That was through a stupid mistake of mine, which we needn't go into, because now's the time to rectify it. I've been waiting for a chance all the evening. The thing only came a few minutes before dinner. But better late than never, they say, and so I hope you'll still accept this trifle from me, Miss Sellwood, with every possible good wish for all the years to come. May they be long and—and very happy!'

His voice vibrated with the commonplace words. As he ceased speaking he took from his waistcoat pocket something that was certainly trifling in size, and he set it on the balustrade between the two teacups. It was a tiny leathern case, and Olivia held her breath. Next moment an exquisite ring, diamonds and emeralds, scintillated in the light of the nearest fairy-lamp.

'This is never for me?' she cried, aghast.

'That it is—if you will take it.'

She was deeply moved; how could she take a ring from him? And yet how could she refuse, or how explain! Each alternative was harder than the last.

'It is far too good for me,' she murmured, 'for a mere birthday present! You are too generous. I can't dream of letting you give me anything half so good!'

'What nonsense! It is not half good enough; it's only the best I could get from Devenholme. I sent in the dogcart for the crack jeweller of the place; it brought him back with a bagful of things, and this was the best of a bad lot. I wish I'd kept the fellow! You might have chosen something else.'

She saw her loophole, and made no reply.

'Would you prefer something else?' he asked eagerly.

'Well, if you insist on giving me a present, it must be something not half so good.'

'That's my affair.'

'And perhaps not a ring.'

'That's another matter, and on one condition I'm on: you must let me drive you in to-morrow to choose for yourself.'

She consented gratefully. Her gratitude was the more profuse from, it may be, an exaggerated sense of the dilemma in which she had found herself a moment before; at all events, it was expressed in a very gratifying manner. So Jack pocketed the ring, and swallowed his tea in excellent heart, longing already for the morrow, and the expedition to Devenholme with Olivia alone at his side.

'That excellent fellow seems very busy with our Olivia. Is there anything in it?' asked Mr Sellwood of his wife.

'I have no idea,' replied Lady Caroline; 'you know I never interfere in such matters. I'm glad you think him an excellent fellow, though; he is simply charming.'

'In fact, we might do worse from every point of view; is that it?' said the Home Secretary drily. 'I'm inclined to agree with you. I hope he won't fizzle his shot by being in too great a hurry.'

The fireworks had begun. Rocket after rocket split the sky in two and descended in a shower of stars. A set-piece stood out against the lake; it represented six eagles on a shield.

'Come and have a look at the family fowls,' said Jack, rejoining Olivia, who had been talking to Claude. 'I'd swop the lot for one respectable emu; it would be a good deal more appropriate for a Duke like me.'

Among other things he had learned at last to pronounce his own title correctly. Also, he looked well at all times in evening dress, but he had never looked better than he did to-night. Claude had these consolations as he watched the pair go down and mingle with the throng.

As a matter of fact, the Duke of St Osmund's had never been in higher spirits in the whole course of his chequered career. Olivia had not, indeed, accepted his offering, but she had done much better, for now he was sure of having her to himself for hours the next day. And what might not happen in those hours? This was one factor in his present content; her little hand within his arm was another that thrilled him even more; but there were further and smaller factors which yet astonished him, each with its unexpected measure of gratification. There were the people bowing and curtsying as he came among them with Olivia on his arm. There were the momentary glimpses of the stately Towers, seen from end to end in a flash, as a bursting rocket spattered the sky with a million sparks that changed colour as they floated to the earth. And there was the feeling, never before this moment entirely unmixed, that after all it was better to be the Duke of St Osmund's than Happy Jack of New South Wales.

'You were right!' he exclaimed, in an attempt to voice what he felt to Olivia; 'you were right that day in the hut to say "I wonder," to what I

said about not minding if I woke up and found myself on Carara after all. You set me wondering at the time, and now I rather think that I should mind a good deal. This place grows upon you. I feel it more and more every morning when I get the first glimpse of it, coming through the pines. But I never felt it as I do to-night. Look at that!'

The entire front of the building was lit up by an enormous Roman candle, playing like a fountain on the terrace. Turret and spire and battlement were stamped sharp and gray against the darkling sky. The six Corinthian columns of the portico stood out like sentinels who had taken a step forward as one man. And in the tympanum overhead the shield of the six eagles that was carved there showed so plainly that Olivia and Jack pointed it out to each other at the same moment.

'You mustn't think I've no respect for the fowls,' said the Duke, when they were both left blinking in the chaste light of the reproofing moon; 'I'm proud enough of them at the bottom of my heart. I may be slow at catching on to new ideas. I know I didn't at first take to everything like a duck to water. I couldn't, after the life I'd led; it was too much for one man; but I'm getting used to it now. As old Claude says, I'm beginning to appreciate it. I am so! This has been the proudest day of my life; I'm proud of everything, of the place, the people'—

'And yourself most of all!' cried a thick voice at his elbow, while Olivia's fingers tightened on his other arm.

It was Matthew Hunt. He was flushed with wine, but steady enough on his legs. Only his tongue was beyond control, and a crowd was at his heels to hear what he would say next.

'Yes, I remember you,' he continued savagely. 'I shan't forget that morning in a hurry'—

'Yet you seem to have forgotten who you are speaking to,' put in the Duke quietly.

Hunt laughed horribly.

'Forgotten? I never knew! All I know is that I'm not speaking to his Grace the Duke'—

Olivia was not shaken off. She only felt a quivering in the arm she held; she only guessed it was the other arm that shot out too quick for her sight from his farther shoulder; and all she saw was the dropping of Hunt at their feet, as if with a bullet through his brain. She conquered her impulse to scream, and she found herself saying instead, 'Well done! It served him right!' And the voice was strange to her own ears.

But her opinion was freely echoed by those who had followed in Hunt's wake. A dozen hands raised him roughly, and kept their hold of him even when he was firm upon his feet, half stunned still, but wholly sobered. He tried to shake them off, but they answered that he must first apologise to his Grace. He refused; and they threatened him with the pond. He gave in then, in a way, speaking one thing but looking another, which was yet the plainer of the two to the Duke. It meant that all was not yet over between him and Hunt. And Jack was very silent as he led Olivia back to the terrace.

'You were quite right,' she said as they went; 'had I been a man I would have done it for you.'

'You're a splendid girl,' he replied, to her confusion; but that was all; nor did he seem conscious of what he said.

Already it was late, and in another hour the band had stopped and the fireworks were over; the people were all gone, and gone the memory of their ringing cheers from the heart of the Duke, who stood alone with Claude Lafont on the moon-lit terrace. Claude had heard of Hunt's insolence and summary chastisement; he regretted the incident extremely; but his state of mind was nothing to that of the Duke, who was now a prey to reactionary depression of the severest sort.

'Are there any revolvers in the house?' said he. 'I shall want a loaded one to-night.'

'What in the world for?' cried Claude, aghast.

'Not for my own brains; you needn't alarm yourself. But you see what a bitter enemy I've made; he might get me at his mercy unarmed out there at the hut. There was murder in his eye to-night, or else truth in his words, and that you won't allow. Certainly there was one or the other. So I want a shooter before I go over.'

'If only you wouldn't go over at all! What's the use, when there are dozens of good rooms lying idle in the house? It does seem a madness!'

'Well, I am half thinking of giving it up; but not to-night, or that brute may go killing my poor little cats. He's capable of anything. Give me a revolver like a good chap.'

Claude fetched one from the gun-room. He it was who still knew the whereabouts of all things, who kept the keys, and who arranged most matters for the Duke. He was Jack's major-domo as well as his guide, philosopher, and friend.

To-night they walked together as far as the shore of the lake. Claude then returned, but for some reason the pair shook hands first. No word was said, save between eye and eye in the pale light of the harvest moon. But Claude had never yet seen his cousin gaze so kindly on the home of their common ancestors as he did to-night before they separated. And that look was a consolation to the poet as he returned alone to the house.

'This is the last link with that miserable bush life,' said Claude to himself; 'and it's very nearly worn through. He's beginning to see that there wasn't so much after all in the inheritance of Esau. After to-night we shall have no more of this nonsense of camping out in a make-believe bush-hut; he will sleep under his own roof, like a sane man, and I'll get him to burn the bush-hut down. After that—after that—well, I suppose the wedding-bells and the altar rails are only a question of time!'

And Claude went within, to talk of art and of books until bookman and artist went to bed; but he himself returned to the terrace instead of following their example. A dark depression was brooding over his spirit, his mind was full of vague forebodings. He had also a hundred regrets, and yet the last and the least of these was, for the moment, the most poignant too. He was sorry he had yielded to Jack in the matter of that revolver. And even as the thought came into his head—by some strange prescience—surely never by coincidence—he heard a shot far away in the direction of the lake. He held his breath,

and heard a single throb of his own heart; then another shot; and then another and another until he had counted five.

Now it was a five-chambered revolver that Claude had handed fully loaded to his cousin.

CUBA AND THE CUBANS.

THE unfortunate struggle which is now devastating Cuba has drawn attention to that rich island, known to Spaniards by many endearing epithets, such as 'The Pearl of the Antilles,' 'The Eden of the West,' and 'The Ever-faithful Isle'—though the last appellation can no longer be applied to it.

The writer has visited Cuba twice, in the year 1885 and again eight years later, not long before the outbreak of the present insurrection. The following remarks apply to the island as it appears in time of peace and political tranquillity. Social conditions have changed for the worse since the outbreak of hostilities.

The first landmark which strikes the traveller who approaches Havana from the sea is the grim outline of the Morro, or fort, which guards the entrance to the harbour. The Morro, which is also used as a prison, has stood many a siege by the French, Dutch, and British, and capitulated to our countrymen in the year 1762, when the city was occupied by British troops. According to a Spanish account of the capture recently published, the amount of booty which fell to the victors was tremendous, and the prize-money obtained by the different members of the expedition ranged in value from about five pounds, in the case of a common sailor or soldier, to a sum which we do not remember, but which ran well into six figures, in the case of the commanders of the land and sea forces.

Havana is a fine city; for, though it does not contain many striking buildings, there is an air of luxury and well-being about it that suggests 'flush times,' and there is probably no part of the Spanish dominions where money is more plentiful in times of peace. It is—or was until recently—the greatest market in the world for at least two great staples, sugar and tobacco. The fame of Havana tobacco is such that the prices obtained for it are out of all proportion to the labour involved in its cultivation and manufacture, and enable the fortunate Cubans, in a sense, to levy a tax on the world's commerce. Tobacco factories are numerous, and skilled workmen well paid; while soldiers and others who have plenty of spare time realise a considerable amount of pocket-money by the manufacture of cigarettes, which they prepare in small packets, these in their turn being arranged in large bundles, called from their shape 'wheels,' and sold to the tobacco factories.

In many buildings the doorkeeper may be observed at work making cigarettes for sale. He has a table before him on which lies a large pile of tobacco, which he rolls into square slips of

rice-paper with a dexterity acquired by long practice. On one of his fingers he wears a small metal cap like a thimble, which is used to thrust into the ends of the cigarettes and close them with the ends the enwrapping paper, for this is the manner in which they are generally sold locally.

Havana was formerly a walled city, and though the walls have long since been destroyed—only traces of them now remaining—it is still the custom to refer to the city 'within' and 'without' the walls (*entre muros* and *extra muros*). The portion within the walls comprises the old city, with its narrow streets, which is still the business quarter, though fine new streets and boulevards mark the newer portion of the city. One of the principal streets is the Calle O'Reilly, so named after a former captain-general. It may be noted that Irish names are not uncommon in the records of the Spanish army, and bear witness to the strong Hibernian emigration which took place several centuries ago, especially during the time of Cromwell.

The people of Havana are pleasure-loving and fond of luxury. There are several theatres, in which good companies perform, the most notable being the Tacon. This theatre, which was until recently the largest in the Western Hemisphere, was built by convict labour. Externally it has no architectural pretensions, but the interior is commodious and luxuriously appointed, the stalls and boxes rising in five tiers one above the other. Between the acts the audience will come out and promenade along the adjacent avenues and boulevards, which are gaily lighted and filled by a well-dressed and well-mannered crowd.

On some nights the band plays in the centre of the square opposite the Tacon Theatre, and here fashionable society will assemble in the cool of the evening to meet and converse, promenading in evening dress under the leafy avenues, or sitting in the chairs which are provided for the public and rented for a small amount.

In the southern part of the island a large amount of fruit—principally bananas—is grown for export to the United States. The port of Baracoa ships a considerable quantity of the red bananas, which find so much favour in the Great Republic. All tropical fruits abound; oranges, mangoes, guavas, pine-apples, sour-sops, and many others. One which deserves special mention is the avocado, or alligator pear, so called from its shape, though it is not a pear at all but an entirely different fruit. It is six to eight inches in length, and contains a stone about an inch in diameter enclosed in a rich yellow pulp. In the West Indies, where butter is dear and bad, this pulp is sometimes used as a substitute; and *apropos* of this the following story may be told: A planter inquired of a friend if it was true that he had discharged his bookkeeper, X—. 'Why, yes,' he replied; 'I found that X— used to eat butter with his bread, and a man who eats butter during the pear season, on the salary that X— had, cannot be honest.'

It was our lot to take a journey in a Spanish steamer from Santiago in the south to Havana in the north, touching at a number of intermediate ports. The steamer was very dirty, as may be imagined when it is said that she carried cattle for the Havana market. The cattle were hoisted on board by means of a steam winch lifting

a rope fastened round their horns, a proceeding which they took quite quietly, and seemed to regard as a matter of course.

The Cubans, as a people, are polite, refined, and hospitable, qualities which they inherit from their Spanish ancestors. An opinion seems to prevail in England that the Spaniards are treacherous, blood-thirsty, and prone to the use of the knife. Nothing can be farther from the truth. The writer has had many dealings with Spaniards, in different parts of the world, and has almost invariably found them gentlemanly and honourable in business and social intercourse. We are afraid that this erroneous impression arises from the perusal in our boyhood days of yellow-backed volumes, with such titles as *The Pirate of the Bahamas*, or *The Boy Terror of the Caribbees*, in which the author reserves all the virtuous parts for his countrymen, the villains being generally foreigners, and Spaniards for choice. The false impression conveyed in early life continues in later years, because few people have any means of correcting it. The newspaper accounts, in which Cubans and Spaniards accuse each other of gross cruelty, should be accepted with as much caution as the telegrams which read 'victory' or 'defeat,' according as they emanate from Havana or New York.

The writer cannot side with the Cuban insurgents; nor with actual knowledge of their circumstances can he admit that they are seriously misgoverned or oppressed. The islands of Cuba and Porto Rico will, in ordinary circumstances, bear favourable comparison as to prosperity with any in the West Indies, and the government of Spain is certainly better than that of most if not all of the Spanish American republics. The real cause of the insurrection in his opinion is that political ferment which in the aforesaid republics produces continual revolutions, and which arises from personal ambition and strife for power. To the insurrectionists the party in power are always tyrants, while the latter consider their enemies as rebels; it is only a question of intrigue and not of principle. As the Cubans are striving for independence, much more sentiment is evolved, although the advantages to be obtained from such independence are quite illusory.

Long residence in various countries of Latin America renders almost inevitable the belief that if Cuba ever obtains her independence she will be one of the most revolution-stricken of American republics. It requires no gift of prophecy to say this, for it can be seen in the neighbouring republic of San Domingo, which in every respect has been more favoured by nature than Cuba. She lies in the same latitude, has the richest soil in the West Indies, is watered by numerous rivers (some of them partially navigable), has abundant mineral wealth and many fine harbours, and is extremely favourably situated for trade both with the United States and Europe; the island is also nearer to Spain than Cuba is. San Domingo was the first part of the New World to be settled by Europeans. She has therefore had every possible advantage in the race for wealth, but since achieving her independence she has drifted steadily backwards. The country is scarcely developed; the tide of emigration has swept past her to the neighbouring Spanish colonies, the consequence being that the white

population is now much smaller. There are no large towns, and nearly the whole of the island is covered with thick forest. The country is a prey to almost continual revolutions, and there is no security for life and property, this indeed being the cause of the undeveloped state of the country. And this is what San Domingo has achieved by her independence.

We speak of the quondam Spanish colony from actual experience and not from hearsay evidence.

NO. 90'S LAST TORPEDO.

By WALTER WOOD,

Author of Barrack and Battlefield; Famous British Warships, &c.

No. 90, First-class Torpedo-boat, was doing the very best within her power; that is to say, she was making eighteen knots, and at that speed she jumped and rattled like a thing of life in evil mood. She pierced the angry waves, to which she scorned to rise, and when a billow rose in front she headed for it viciously, smote it below the hissing crest, and rushed madly on to meet the next. Her breathless engines thrashed her through the swelling seas, and the thick spume trembled on her quivering deck.

One day out from Gibraltar, running home for overhauling and refitting, No. 90 had met a gale from the north-west. To turn and seek shelter at the Rock would be as dangerous, her commander argued, as to go ahead, and would incur the risk of allegations of poor seamanship and suggestions that he feared to face a breeze; and being a sensitive man, he dreaded either. To go ahead in weather like that was to travel in constant fear of foundering, while to heave-to with such a craft as No. 90 was to be overwhelmed in the tempestuous waters.

'We're between the deep sea and the devil with a vengeance,' muttered the captain. 'But there's no help for it. It's full speed ahead, and Heaven be with us.'

He ran his fingers down his sombre oil-skins, to see that every button held its place, and gave his sou'-wester a final pull over his hair. Then he sheltered himself under the lee of the forward conning tower, and began a watch that would not end until the gale died down, however long that might be, or No. 90 was safe in harbour.

'Promises to be a stiff blow,' said the sub-lieutenant, Harridance, struggling to the captain's side. He and his superior, Hanson, were at school together, and there was scant ceremony between them while on board of No. 90. 'I half believe the gunner's sea-sick. He's making awful groans below.'

'I should advise you to turn in for a few minutes and get a snatch of sleep while you may,' returned Hanson. 'There'll be no chance soon.'

'Not any for me, thank you,' replied the junior. 'The gunner isn't responsible for his actions just at present. He hasn't got the hang of the motion yet, and is cursing fate and the service generally.'

'He'll have to rouse up soon,' said Hanson grimly, 'for it seems to me that before long it will be a case of every man for himself.'

The sub-lieutenant produced a flask of whisky from a pocket of his oily frock, and offered it to his commander. 'It's the finest drop of mountain dew on the Bay at this moment,' he added, clinging hard to a rail as he spoke, 'and there are plenty of liners knocking about.'

'It's the only means of getting warm there'll be until this blow is over,' Hanson said. 'I suppose there's no comfort below?'

'Not even an apology for it,' said Harridance cheerfully. 'The gunner's in a foot of water on the floor, if he's in an inch, and every corner is soaked. As for the atmosphere—ugh, it's vile, even for No. 90. I suppose you're going hot and strong in the teeth of everything?'

Hanson nodded.

'For all she's worth?'

The captain nodded again.

'No intention of seeking shelter at the Rock, I suppose?'

'No turning back for No. 90 this trip,' responded Hanson.

'Not going to make for Bordeaux, or the lee of Belle Isle?'

'Not with a craft in this state. It would create a wrong opinion in foreign minds as to the efficiency of British torpedo-boats.'

'Then it's neck or nothing,' said Harridance, 'for I think, of all the old carcases of the '85 batch of boats, No. 90 is the rottenest and oldest.'

'She's as tight as a crack liner,' growled Hanson, who refused to acknowledge any defect in this his first command.

'Love is blind to faults,' laughed Harridance. 'Fancy a man refusing to admit or see that anything is wrong with a tin kettle that ought long since to have been sold out of the service or put in a museum. Why, the very reason we're going home is to have the old coffin put into something like decent trim. For my own part, I'm certain the odds are equal against our getting into port with whole skins.'

'You've a nice comfortable way of looking at it,' said Hanson, not without a secret admiration of his junior's coolness and good spirits. 'But half your indifference is assumed, and the rest is due to the fact that you have no family ties.'

'You're wrong about the assumption, but correct about the ties. I'm not indifferent. I'm merely philosophical. It runs in the breed of us, and I'm developing it. I want the Harridance strain to become, in the fullness of time, utterly unimpressionable, and careless of what fate or fortune has in store for them. That's my ideal of a man.'

'Bah!' replied Hanson with amused good-humour; 'a worthless stick-in-the-mud.'

'Think of the comfort of it,' urged Harridance. 'Come weal, come woe, you wouldn't care. You'd go serenely on.'

'Well, young gentleman, you can work up all your philosophy, for you'll need it before to-night, unless the gale goes down.'

'I'm fit, whatever comes,' responded Harridance gaily.

'Then make yourself fitter by going below

and getting a nap. You'll be all the better for it, and it'll be to the advantage of No. 90. Mind you don't let the whole of the Bay in when you go below. Watch your chance, dive, and shut yourself up.'

This being in the nature of an order, Harridance obeyed. He made no effort to sleep, when once he got below, but entertained himself by shouting nonsense at the prostrate gunner, who after leave ashore had not yet had time to get accustomed to the astonishing acrobatic performances of No. 90.

Meanwhile, the gale blew harder, and No. 90 struggled on in the teeth of it. On deck Hanson and the helmsman were deluged by the seas that came on board and raced towards the stern. Each wave that broke over No. 90 sent part of itself down the funnel and the ventilators, and promised fair to sweep away everything that reared its head above the deck.

Summoning all the philosophy he possessed, and his stock was large, Harridance determined to try to get a spell of sleep, however short, and to this end he lay on the least wet locker, and hanging on as only crews of torpedo-boats and North Sea smacksmen know how, he managed to become unconscious of his surroundings.

The junior awoke from a dream in which he was fighting desperately with a savage, who was armed with an enormous club. At the moment of awaking the weapon had descended upon his head; in reality he had been thrown off the locker by a heavy lurch of No. 90, and was badly soured before he could regain his feet. The gunner had clambered on deck, and Harridance crawled cautiously after him, feeling very wet and wretched.

He looked about him, and finding that the gale was worse, determined to say nothing more to trouble Hanson. When he reached his superior's side, he made no observation.

'It's cosier aboard of her than here,' said Hanson, pointing to a distant object.

The junior looked, and saw ahead, down on the horizon, the hull of an ocean liner. They neared each other rapidly, No. 90 leaping frantically, and the steamer coming on with steady sweeps. To the giant craft the howling wind was a welcome aid, meaning two knots extra in the hour and a prosperous run to Gibraltar. Within her towering hull the motion of the seas was good to those who liked their pleasures strong, and a couple of saloon passengers who were holding hard to a rail on the forward turtle-back gazed admiringly at No. 90.

'The pitching here is glorious,' said one, whose experience was confined to ocean liners; 'but I'd give a fiver for an hour on board that craft just now. I'm fond of a good pitch and roll—so splendid for the liver.'

'It must be a heavenly sensation,' agreed the other feebly. He had had enough already.

The captain of the liner was on the upper bridge, watching with a sailor's eye the way in which No. 90 headed for the seas. As he approached, she plunged headlong into a wave, and for a moment seemed to have been swallowed by the heaving mass. When No. 90 shook herself free she was abreast of the liner and running swiftly past her. The captain raised his hand in friendly salute, and took very careful

notice of her number and condition. 'If she makes one or two more headers like that,' he thought, 'she'll want some one to report where and when she was last seen. Two or three such plunges, and she'll sink like shot.'

The chief engineer was smoking a pipe contentedly and meditatively as No. 90 struggled past. 'God pity the men in the stoke-hole,' he said, taking his pipe from his mouth for a moment. 'What an awful den it will be just now. Whew! What in the name of goodness are they driving her like that for?'

The captain of No. 90 saw the hand-wave of the liner's captain, and waved his own in answer. His smooth face hardened for an instant, as he thought of the difference in their positions in the same circumstances. To the captain of the *Sun of the Orient*, twin-screw mail boat, one day out from Plymouth, this wind and sea were matter only for an ordinary entry in the log-book; to him, commander of No. 90, First-class Torpedo-boat, it was a question of life and death.

The *Sun of the Orient* lunged comfortably on her way to Eastern Seas, and No. 90 strained and laboured northward, a low black body on the raging waters. Night came down with inky darkness, and a red glare shot into the sky from the raking funnel. The half-naked stokers tried no longer to feed the furnaces on scientific principles, and it was nothing to them that sheets of flame rose from the stack, which, if No. 90 had been advancing towards an enemy, would have made her swift descent to the ocean bed a matter of certainty. It was a race for life, a conflict with a foe as merciless and almost as strong as any that a powerful fleet could have sent against her, and the issue was doubtful, even if every bit of steel and iron held its place.

When morning broke, Hanson and Harridance were still side by side. During the hours of darkness the junior had maintained his philosophy wonderfully well, with the help of his capacious and replenished flask; but even his imperturbability was becoming affected, and when he stamped his wet, cold feet on the deck, and tried to rub some warmth into his stiff and almost frozen hands, and dwelt upon the sorry makeshift of a breakfast that he must be content with, he yearned for the comfort of a quiet harbour, and thought of a nook by the fire of a third-rate inn as an excellent equivalent for Paradise, and of coffee, eggs, and bacon as a meal of princely sort. The funnel looked gaunt and cold in the cheerless dawn, and the salt grime of the seas lay thickly upon it. The salt had caused a greasy film to rest upon the search-light projector, and everywhere the gear and fittings looked the worse for buffeting with wind and water. Drenched and cold, those on deck hung doggedly on, and still No. 90 ploughed her way towards the Channel.

'I wonder,' Harridance sang out above the gale, 'if one of those poet fellows who rant so much about the glories of the sea ever spent a rough night on a torpedo-boat, or knew what it was to stand knee-deep in water for a few hours at a stretch, with blue toes and fingers, and whistle for the breakfast that never comes?'

Hanson smiled, but made no answer. The sun was just appearing above the horizon, and he

was looking anxiously to see what promise of a day it gave.

'It's going to blow harder than ever,' he said. 'Then I'd exchange this spot for the bridge of a tramp of the meanest class,' replied Harridance. 'I must fortify myself by another pull at the flask. Here's an acrobatic feat for you.'

He straddled out his legs, and released his hold of the rail to which he had been clinging.

'Be careful,' shouted Hanson warningly. 'It wouldn't need much of a lurch to send you off a slippery deck like this.'

'Here's to you and No. 90,' Harridance retorted jauntily. 'Alone and on one leg I do it, and to make it more effective and poetic, close my eyes. I drink towards you, as the villain in the melodrama says.'

'Look out—water's coming!' Hanson warned him.

He was too late. A great sea ran up and broke on board of No. 90, and before Harridance could regain his hold of the rail the wave had carried him with it.

Hanson clenched his teeth and stifled a groan. In the twinkling of an eye a great gap had been made in his existence, and he prepared to go on with his duty with a curious aching at the heart. There was, he argued, no time for mourning; lives of men were in his keeping, and dependent on his nerve and skill. For the present he must put the thought of Harridance aside, and once more set himself sternly, wet and weary though he was, to pilot his little charge across the Bay. So he thought, and so he got himself prepared to act. He gave another and last look at the spot where his friend had disappeared, and started, for there the junior still was, making a convulsive effort to clutch the side of No. 90. Hanson saw what had happened—a returning wave had swept Harridance back to the boat, and might indeed have landed him bodily upon the low deck. The captain bounded to the side, seized the rail with an iron grip, and with a grasp not less strong, as No. 90 rolled almost on her beam-ends, laid hold of Harridance and hauled him with a sweep aboard, as the craft leaned over to the other side.

The junior staggered to his feet and made his way back to his old place. 'Narrow squeak that,' he shouted, when he had regained his breath. 'Lucky I was weighted down by sea-boots and duffles.'

'A miss is as good as a mile,' the captain told him, showing no concern, although his heart beat fast with joy.

'Whisky all gone—no more comfort from the flask,' said Harridance.

'And no more fooling,' replied the senior.

Harridance laughed, and No. 90 struggled on her way.

As the morning came the gale grew fiercer, but the boat held her own with unflinching purpose, and still the men with hearts of iron in the blazing hold fed the hungry fires and tended the frantic engines. In that lurid turmoil no man tried to speak; whenever a thing had to be done it was done by sign of hand and not by word of mouth.

At last a mighty sea came roaring on, an awful liquid wall, before which it seemed as if no human work could stand. It would have put a

liner on her mettle and tested the nerve of the man at her wheel. To No. 90 the sea gave promise of nothing but destruction. Hanson and the junior watched it with grim fascination. No. 90 was still doing well, and dashed dauntlessly into the rearing mass. She rose to it as far as she could, rose until it seemed as if she would be thrown over bodily and go round like the spoke of a wheel, then with a noise like thunder the sea broke over her, and when No. 90 at last rose she was at the mercy of wind and wave. The sea had swept and shorn her deck; it had carried away the funnel and put out the engine fires; it had smashed in the after-skylight, and flooded the wardroom. The steam from the extinguished fires rose in hissing white clouds, and the scalded men from the engine-room crawled one by one on deck, having nothing more to do in the place where they were already standing waist-deep in coal-black water. Some were badly hurt about the face and hands, and they staggered blindly until they found a rail to hold by; then they gripped hard, and waited for anything that fortune should award.

Hanson looked about him. The desolation was complete. Not a dry corner was left in No. 90, not a particle of warmth remained. Below, furniture and fittings were awash, and the wardroom table, torn from its fastenings, was dashed about as if at every roll and pitch it would be hurled through the thin steel shell which formed the hull. The ship's boat had been wrenched from its perch astern; the after pair of torpedo-tubes had been torn away and carried overboard; forward, the Nordenfelt machine-gun had gone, and with the funnel had disappeared the search-light projector.

As Hanson looked upon the devastation he could not repress a ghastly smile. He wondered why fortune, having played this trick with him, having done so much with the life and worth of No. 90, had stopped so short, and left the hull at the mercy of the powers which knew no mercy.

He scanned the horizon slowly. His practised eye told him that the worst of the gale had passed; and the hope arose within him that after all things might go well, and he would be spared to take the battered carcase into port.

The captain's survey finished when he looked ahead. He gazed long and hard, rubbed his eyes, rested them for a moment, and looked again. Still hoping that what he saw might be fancy, he shut them a second time. Having done that, and looked once more, he turned to Harridance, and pointing ahead, asked simply, 'What do you make of that?'

Harridance, too, had been looking closely. He answered briefly, 'Waterspout.'

'And coming this way?'

The junior nodded.

'It's growing as it comes.'

Again the junior acquiesced.

'We've got no chance against it if it strikes us?'

Harridance shook his head.

'Then the Lord have mercy on us.'

'Amen,' replied the junior fervently. He was very serious now.

Both gazed in silence for a moment, each wondering what the end would be.

Suddenly Hanson exclaimed, 'There's a derelict at the base of the column.'

'And what of that?' asked Harridance. 'It only makes destruction certain for us.'

'The wreck will prove our salvation, God willing.'

'I don't follow you. The waterspout is bringing down the wreck with a force that will send us to the bottom like a bag of lead.'

It's a heaven-sent target, as you'll see,' said Hanson. 'We've one torpedo left, I think?'

'Only one, but I believe it's all right.'

'The tube is workable?' Hanson still spoke interrogatively.

'Uninjured, judging from the look of it.'

'In any case it would be more effective than the Nordenfolt, even if we had the gun left. As we haven't, there's no alternative.'

The junior wondered vaguely what his captain meant. He understood in part when Hanson worked his way to the tube and began to uncover it without seeking help. Harridance joined him, and in silence took a share in the task. Soon the tube was fully exposed, and Hanson made a rapid survey to see that all was well with it. The tube and the torpedo in it had escaped all damage in the gale, and the weapon lay there snugly, ready, even to the fitted war-head, for discharge at any object which might be selected.

The wind had by this time fallen, but No. 90 gained little advantage from this fact. She pitched and rolled so wildly that at any moment she might make her last plunge, and how she kept her battered shell afloat was a mystery to Hanson even then.

The waterspout came slowly on, gaining force as it approached. It was a thousand yards away when Hanson trained the tube and prepared to thrust the missile into the water. The aiming was a simple matter, for the thing to be destroyed was large and near. By this time the derelict, almost submerged, was clear to all. With a steadier platform there would have been no question about hitting such a target, but on that uncertain deck it needed inflexible nerve to make success a certainty.

Slowly but infallibly the waterspout drew near, the hull of No. 90 in its path. The thousand yards were reduced to five hundred; still the captain did not fire his precious shot; another hundred yards were passed, and the crew for the most part closed their eyes. Not more than two hundred yards separated No. 90 from her foe when the impulse charge was fired, and the tube vomited forth the last torpedo.

There was a little cloud of spray where it disappeared beneath the water; the men held their breath and clenched their teeth, and waited to see what the end would be.

Hanson had seen many torpedoes fired, but never one the course of which he watched so hungrily as this. On the consummation of that deadly shot the safety of the boat and every soul on board depended. There was no mincing matters, no shutting of the eyes to that one simple, awful fact. There lay the low black battered hull, rising and falling to the seas, with no power of motion left; her engines stilled, inert and helpless; there in front was the thing which looked more deadly and malignant as it grew. Frequently in his career had Hanson thought of

what might happen if his country went to war. He had pictured the awful strain on his nerves when on the eve of battle; he had imagined all the horrors of the newest forms of fights at sea, of men going down in hosts, pinned in their mighty works of steel and iron, sunk by one skilful torpedo or one lucky shot from a monster gun. He had dwelt on the devastation which might be caused by lightning, remote as was the possibility of that force communicating with a magazine; and there was no sensation which he might experience when awaiting battle that he had not analysed. But in all his meditations he had not called to mind such a situation as this, helpless as a child and at the mercy of a natural phenomenon.

When the explosion came, there was a dull roar which rose above the noise of the dying gale, and a pillar of spray shot skyward. The torpedo had hit its mark, and the gloomy hungry column had made the final stage of its destructive journey. The derelict was shattered, and the waterspout was spent. Already it was crumbling away into and mingling with the sea. Hanson's nerve had never faltered, and the victory now was his.

For nearly one long minute all on board kept silence, then there was a shout of joy, a chorus of deliverance from those who until that time had looked upon themselves as lost. Hanson led the shout himself, and Harridance joined in with wild enthusiasm.

'If we can keep her afloat till help comes, we're saved,' cried Hanson. 'There's no more wind, and the sea will soon go down. Work for your lives to keep her up, boys, and we'll show the world that No. 90 can weather even Biscay gales and get to port.'

The captain himself began the work, and Harridance and the gunner were the first to join him. Men forgot their scalds and fears, and for the time the differences of rank found no remembrance with them. There was one thing only to be done, and that was to clear the crippled shell of as much salt water as they could get overboard, and keep it floating till assistance came.

They got a signal of distress up—an old square flag and an oily frock rolled up as a ball, flying just below the tattered pennant—and never a man gave in until a collier tramp, making an unprofitable trip in ballast, discerned the quarry and came joyfully alongside. Then one or two fell senseless where they stood, and knew of nothing till they awoke in the close, dark fore-castle of the steamer.

'She'll keep afloat all right now, sir,' said the captain of the tramp. 'There's no sea on, and she's coming astern like a cork. A couple of my men are on board till yours are ready to go back. Won't you rest a bit in my cabin? Your young man's at the whisky and cheese and biscuits already, and speaks highly of 'em.'

'I think I will,' said Hanson drowsily.

He went below, took a seat on a locker, murmured to Harridance to call him when the Eddystone Light showed, and fell into an untroubled sleep.

The captain of the tramp was liberal in his use of coal for this particular occasion, and he paced the bridge in joyous spirits.

Darkness came again, and as two white lights

were hauled up the foremast of the tramp, her captain slapped his lean pocket with a laugh, and thought of what he would buy his sweetheart with his share of No. 90's salvage.

THE ARTIST OF THE STREET.

You all know him. Everybody knows the shabby, hungry-looking man who sits on the pavement, or kneels in the gutter, embellishing the flags with brilliant illustrations in coloured chalk. He does not claim a high place among the knights of the pencil and brush, but he is an aristocrat in the street. He would never dream of associating with newspaper and match sellers, and regards the German bandsman as a vulgar person, but one step removed from the common organ-grinder. Social distinctions are quite as carefully drawn in the street as in the drawing-room; we wonder much whether the world contains a man who does not feel able to patronise and look down upon somebody else.

A truce to moralising! Let us 'to our nuttuns.' If our street artist happen to be a whole man, he regards a brother professional who is a cripple with considerable envy. A member of the fraternity once told us, with a sigh, that if he possessed but one leg instead of the usual complement of two, his 'takings' would be twice as large as they were. He looked upon the loss of a limb from a purely business point of view, regarding the one-legged man's inability to 'stamp about and keep warm' as the only disadvantage of which he could complain. All other drawbacks were quite outweighed by the sympathy his misfortune received in a practical shape. Our informant modestly admitted that although the artistic merit of his own handiwork was infinitely superior—in his judgment—to that of a lame sailor of our acquaintance, he could never hope to compete with the inferior workman for public favour. Ah! if he had had the luck to lose a leg, he said; and he sighed again.

Our artist has studied human nature, and knows that the foot passenger will pause at a corner more readily than he will at any undefined point in the street. He therefore chooses a corner as the site of his operations, and selects a dry spot on the pavement to receive his studies in chalk. His preparations are simple in the extreme: he applies his coat-sleeve vigorously until the surface is fairly clean, draws forth the old sardine tin which contains his materials, and sets to work without more ado, keeping a jealous eye upon the muddy-pawed dogs who have no respect for art.

He is not remarkable for the originality of his conceptions, but he compensates for this by boldness in treatment of familiar subjects. A lighthouse of immaculate whiteness, standing on the verge of a very brown cliff, rising out of a very blue sea. A ship in full sail upon an inconsistently calm ocean, or a steamer ploughing its way, with dreadful distinctness of purpose, towards a very yellow beach in the right foreground. The bust of some celebrity, Mr W. E. Gladstone, or the late Duke of Wellington for choice; and an elaborate scroll bearing a brief text relative to the virtues of charity, almost completes the list. We were once attracted by

landscapes which professed to represent 'Dunnottar Castle' and the 'Banks of the Esk,' and, albeit those localities are wholly unknown to us, we felt pleasure in rewarding efforts which in our humble estimation marked a distinct advance in pavement art. 'You draw from memory, we observe,' we said to the artist, as we gave him an encouraging smile and twopence. 'Very good indeed,' we added critically, 'very good.' On the following day, however, we chanced to come across the same artist at a different corner, and those identical pictures smiled at us again as 'Huntingtower' and the 'Banks of the Dee;' and despite the acknowledged family likeness that exists among historic Scottish ruins and riverside scenes, our faith was shaken. We were willing to make all allowances for failure of memory on the part of our artist, but thought that in this instance he had overstepped the bounds of artistic license, and our charity took the negative shape of refraining to allude to the discrepancy.

We can recall but one other instance of an original design, and that was not a success. We looked on with interest while the picture grew under our artist's hand, but we did not know what to make of it. It was a large round picture, divided horizontally into exact halves of green and blue; the lower and green half was intersected by a broad perpendicular stripe of yellow which ceased abruptly as it met the upper and blue half. An object resembling the stern view of a scarlet and white elephant enlivened the yellow stripe, and while our artist proceeded to give variety to the scene by adding vegetation to the lower, and clouds to the upper half, we stood lost in speculation as to what he intended to portray. 'What is it?' we asked, with all the humility of conscious ignorance, when the picture appeared to be finished.

Our artist looked up with an expression more pitying than indignant, but did not deign to answer our question in words at once. He took a piece of chalk and wrote below, 'The Lover's Walk.' 'Yon's a soger an' his lassie,' he said, after a pause, indicating the object which had puzzled us. 'Can ye no' see?'

We had not expected romance from our artist, and apologising for our stupidity, hastily withdrew. The sky of that picture was worthy of a Turner, and the trees were likewise admirable; but we are still of opinion that the perspective and figure drawing were faulty, though we did not feel called upon to say so.

But there! We have no right to pose as a critic, for we frankly confess that though our education included freehand drawing, we couldn't produce a picture half so good if the best chalk and smoothest pavement in any city you like were placed at our disposal for a month.

His audience usually consists of message-boys, who study the pictures with pensive appreciation from the depths of the baskets they carry (empty) over their heads and shoulders. It takes an average message-boy a considerable time to thoroughly look through the pavement gallery, but he does it conscientiously, taking each picture in turn until he comes to the text. He glances guiltily at that, gives the artist a side-look round the corner of the basket which shelters his head, plunges his hands an inch farther into his pockets and hurries away, as though he had suddenly

remembered another message. This section of our artist's public is not a paying one, but he looks upon it with an indulgent eye: no doubt, like the manager of a first-class theatre, he prefers a house 'filled with paper' to empty benches.

The sun grows hot, or the wind blows cold, but our artist never ceases to keep watch and ward over his work; he sits in dreamy contentment, or stamps up and down the pavement as the weather may dictate, but never for a moment does he lose sight of his drawings. The only individual with whom he condescends to hold intercourse as an equal is the policeman on whose beat he has taken up his position; doubtless from politic reasons he prefers to remain on friendly terms with the guardian of the peace.

Our artist's manner of accepting (we must risk hurting his feelings and say) 'alms,' is peculiar. He acknowledges a penny gratefully, but his intonation implies that the giver has at all events had his money's worth, if not more. It reminds us strongly of the way in which a celebrated physician once accepted his fee of a guinea for telling us that we had really nothing the matter with us. Our artist never pockets his penny at once if it be thrown to him; he pushes it carelessly on to the nearest picture with the toe of his boot, with a lavish negligence which is somewhat marred by the sharp lookout he continues to keep on it. We do not quite understand why he should make this ostentatious display. Does he wish to impress the audience (of message-boys) with the idea that a penny more or less is nothing to a man of his calibre? 'That one coin is not worth stooping for?' Or does he hold the theory so widely cherished in much higher circles that money runs to money, and that therefore one penny will attract more? Our opinion is divided upon this point, and we have so far been unable to persuade our artist to furnish us with an explanation, though we have disbursed much copper coin with no other view than to set our doubts at rest. On one occasion we bestowed a penny upon him, laying it ourself upon the sky of a seascape; we walked down the street, and five minutes afterwards returned; our penny (we are morally certain we recognised it, for it was a new penny) still lay where we had placed it. We addressed our artist.

'Why don't you pick up the penny we gave you?' we asked.

'That's no yours,' responded our artist with terse ingratitude, and unblushing disregard for truth.

'But it *is*,' we insisted with polite obstinacy. 'We know it's the one we gave you.'

Our artist abandoned his first statement as untenable and said: 'Ut's as weel there.'

'But why don't you put it in your pocket?' we asked again.

'Ah 'll tak ut up th' noo,' replied our artist ungraciously; 'ut's as weel there.'

We found that our interview was inviting an undesirable degree of public attention, and abandoned it for the time being; but we mean to prosecute our inquiries on the next suitable opportunity. We do not wish to be severe upon our artist, however. He may not be a hard worker, but he is never obtrusive, and rarely asks for a donation even though you stop to look at his pictures. If he collects two shillings or so, he con-

siders that he has had an excellent day, and is contented; dusk brings the end of his working day, and when the evening falls, hiding his efforts from the public eye, he creeps quietly away, never once looking back to see them blurred out of all recognition by hurrying feet. He will come back to-morrow and begin all over again, the same old pictures which must be as stale to his eye as the tunes the organ-grinder inflicts upon his ears and ours.

The artist has not always to wait for night to be relieved. What has happened now at mid-day to make him shade his eyes with his hand and look with anxious gaze towards the West? Is it a band with its attendant crowd of men and boys who will recklessly trample over his half-finished work? Is it a flock of sheep frightened and harried from one side of the street to the other by the active collie? We can see nothing, but our artist ceases working, and now we notice that his eyes are fixed upon the sky and the ominous banks of cloud which are hurrying up. The sun disappears, and the brightness of noon gives place to threatening dullness. Alas for our artist! A big rain-drop falls on Mr Gladstone's eye and blots it out; another and another. Like the oysters in *Alice in Wonderland*, they come 'thick and fast, and more and more and more.' Umbrellas are unfurled, and the British public struggles into its waterproof. Our artist's face grows long and sad. Poor man! a wet day is a lost day to him, and after another sorrowful upward glance at the unrelenting clouds, he turns up his ragged coat collar, crams his chalk-box into his pocket, and slouches away to find shelter in the nearest public-house, where he will sit and hope for the sun's return. We leave him there.

RECOMPENSES.

Though friends are false, and fate unkind,
The sunset keeps its gold,
And violets blue and sweet I find
As those I found of old:
As erstwhile blackbirds build and sing
Among the orchard trees,
Primroses bloom and daisies spring
As thickly o'er the leas.

As sweetly in the holy hush
That comes at twilight dim,
The clear-voiced thrush in alder bush
Pours forth his vesper hymn;
And when the green waves kiss the shore,
And break around my feet,
I hear as in the days of yore
Sea-music grand yet sweet.

No added thorns are on the rose
That blooms by lawn and lea,
The wind of Heaven as freshly blows
As ere it blew on me.
Though fickle fortune turn and fly,
And friends forget my name,
The charms of earth, of sea, and sky
To me are still the same.

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JOURNALISTIC REMUNERATION.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PICTURE.

By ERNEST PHILLIPS,
Author of *How to become a Journalist*.

It is to be feared that visions conjured up by the article on 'Journalistic Remuneration' in a recent issue may, if the other side of the picture be not considered, disturb the mental perspective of those aspiring 'middle-class authors'—as the writer termed them—and contributors to the periodic press who are trying, very often with but indifferent success, to secure a livelihood by means of their pens. The writer, at the very outset, found an excuse for his interesting article in the statement that in the 'so-called hand-books' to the press the question of remuneration was not so fully discussed as its importance demanded. As the author of one of those hand-books, the present writer may be permitted to say that he was at particular pains to place before literary aspirants a full and accurate statement of journalistic remuneration. In the main, the conclusion arrived at—and the present writer, it may be pointed out, is a journalist and author himself—was that journalism, as a profession, was sadly under-paid. The author of the article on 'Journalistic Remuneration' quotes Mr James Payn, but Mr Payn has ever been one of the first to maintain that the gains of a journalistic or literary life are far and away below those which may be acquired by a career devoted to law, commerce, medicine, or even the minor branches of trade. In the higher walks of journalism, as in the higher walks of literature, there are many plums; but it has to be confessed that on the other hand there are many, very many, journalists, clever and educated, who are slaving away at wages little or nothing in advance of those earned by a skilful mechanic, and immeasurably below the profits of the successful retail tradesman.

The author of 'Journalistic Remuneration,' however, was more concerned with the earnings of those who devote themselves to what is known as 'free-lance' work, rather than with the salaries of

those who are members of the permanent staffs of the daily, weekly, and monthly organs of the press. It is because of this very fact that his teaching is unsound, and the inference to be drawn from his article is unsafe as a guide to would-be writers. In effect, he contends that it is an easy matter for a 'free-lance' to make his £4 or £5 a week by miscellaneous contributions to the press, 'untrammelled by any of the drawbacks of an office life.' Applied to a few individuals this may be, and is, correct; as a general statement it is at once unfounded and misleading. Heaven knows that there is little need to print incentives to intelligent youths to forsake their occupations and seek to carve out for themselves a name with no other means than their pens. Only recently the writer of these lines received a letter from a youth who had mastered shorthand, and had had the glory of seeing himself in print in *Tit-Bits*. Fired by this success, he craved for a literary life, and asked in his letter for information as to how to proceed, on arriving at London, to make a living as a penny-a-liner and occasional contributor to journalism. It is going too far to say that it would be impossible for a country youth to come up to London and succeed where so many natives find it hard to keep afloat—there are instances enough to show that the thing is not impossible. But, nevertheless, the chances were ninety-nine to one against that infatuated youth, whose delusive hopes had doubtless been based upon the alluring accounts, written by irresponsible authors, of the shower of golden guineas waiting to fall at the feet of every one who takes up the pen and seeks to place himself in touch with the reading public. Visions of this description are vain; hopes founded upon them crumble to ashes like Dead Sea fruit, and he who, lacking influence and downright genius, has embarked upon a journalistic or literary career, 'untrammelled by any of the drawbacks of an office life,' will ere long find that he has been grievously disappointed, and that neither editors nor public care for the message he so fondly imagined the world was waiting for.

There is no doubt that 'free-lance' work pays. At no time was there a wider field offered to the energies and abilities of writers. This is due, of course, to the enormous multiplication of newspapers and magazines. Many of these have their permanent staffs, who write all that is requisite and necessary; others are very largely dependent upon outside contributions, and it is to these productions, more than to the ordinary newspapers, that the attention of 'free-lance' writers is directed. But to say or to suggest that it is comparatively easy to earn a 'snug little income' solely by this class of work is to say that which is not correct in the great majority of cases. The greater number of the articles from outside which are accepted by these periodicals are from the pens of writers who have appointments of some kind to fall back upon as a means of livelihood, and who employ their spare time in the compilation of articles suitable for the different publications to whose columns they endeavour to obtain admittance. This is the general state of affairs; the exceptions—writers who depend solely upon these special articles, and have no fixed situation—are few in number. And furthermore, even in those cases, it very often happens that they have secured such a footing in certain offices that their contributions there are invariably accepted, so that to all intents and purposes they may regard their work for those particular journals as a permanency. What is meant by this may be illustrated by an incident which occurred to the present writer. He had made many attempts to place an article with a certain magazine, but his manuscripts were always returned with the formula, 'declined with thanks.' Finally, the editor was good enough to send him a brief note with a returned article. It was to the effect that it was very little use sending him articles, as the editor had secured a circle of contributors upon whom he could rely for all that was requisite to fill his paper. This is proof that an outside writer, not included in these circles—which exist in the case of nearly all newspapers—has little chance of success; certainly he has small hope of making a living out of his contributions, when they are declined for such a reason!

The writer has a good connection with many publications, but he would be very loth to throw up a permanent situation and put his trust in the unfailling generosity of their editors. There are too many disappointments in life to justify one in willingly creating another for one's self. Manuscripts are kept a month and returned—out of date. Sometimes they are never returned at all. Sometimes the ideas are stolen and worked up differently, the unlucky author receiving his 'copy' back, and having the mortification of seeing, a few weeks later, an article which he knows has been based upon his own work. In the case of high-class and respectable papers and magazines, such proceedings are, of course, unknown; but with many of the innumerable trashy publications which burst into life amid a great blaze of advertisements, and signalise their birth by a loud appeal to authors, many shady things are done ere they descend to their early graves, 'unhonoured and unsung!'

One of the greatest grievances contributors have against some editors is the unduly and unnecessarily long detention of their articles when they

are not accepted. The writer remembers when President Carnot was assassinated a couple of years ago, writing an article dealing with the violent deaths of great rulers, in all times and climes. The preparation of that article involved a week's research and reading. It was sent off to a well-known paper. Three weeks passed by, and as nothing had been heard of it, a gentle reminder was despatched after it. To that even there was no answer, but four weeks later the article was returned, with the customary intimation that it was very regretfully declined with thanks! Thus the article had been kept until President Carnot had been all but forgotten, and until his assassination had passed into history. This occurs in scores of cases, and is one great drawback to a man's earning his living by this class of writing. If an article of topical interest were returned, say, in a day or two, the author would have a chance of placing it elsewhere; as things are, it is shelved until its marketable value has departed. Periodicals of the 'bits' type are the greatest sinners in this respect.

And it must be remembered that amongst the thousands of papers and periodicals there are many that struggle into life and maintain a precarious existence without a very consistent regard to the maxim that strict honesty is the best policy. Sometimes the author will find that his manuscript is 'lost'—at least so he may be told when he appeals for its return after it has been in the office perhaps a month. If the contributor keeps his eye upon that journal, it may not be long before he discovers in its columns a garbled and perhaps partly rewritten version of his own article. But what can he do? He kept no copy of his manuscript, and the bare denial, and the burning of the manuscript, are all that are needed to sweep away whatever case he may fancy he has. It has happened that articles have been used as letters—that is to say, the headline has been struck out, and the matter published as a 'letter to the editor.' If the contributor makes a noise, he may receive a letter telling him it was an error, and offering him perhaps five shillings as payment, on the ground that the matter would not have been used if it had been known that payment was expected. Another device of the 'shady' type of publications is for the so-called editor to return an article, informing the sender that he was just contemplating writing one himself on that particular subject! When the article does appear, its resemblance to the one rejected may be striking to a degree.

It will be seen, therefore, that the occasional contributor has much to contend against; and he who cuts himself adrift from office life, and seeks to make a living as a 'free lance' will find, unless he has influence and connections, that he has taken a step which oftener leads to adversity and poverty than to prosperity and affluence. Journalism is overcrowded. To enter the law, medicine, divinity, and almost all other callings, a man has to spend years in training, and at the end of that period has to face a stiff examination. In journalism and literature there are neither of these tests. If a man can write that which will interest, entertain, or instruct the world, he has a chance of finding an avenue for placing his lucubrations in the hands of the reading public. But to argue from this that a writer with neither

influence nor connection, who trusts implicitly in his pen, is certain of succeeding as a 'free lance' is not justified by the good fortune of the few; success in this department must by no means be regarded as the normal reward of every contributor to the press.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER XII.—THE WRONG MAN.

THE Duke had proceeded to his hut with the slow and slouching gait of a man bemused; yet his sinews were like the strings of a lute, and there was an inordinately keen edge to his every sense. He heard the deer cropping the grass far behind him; and he counted the very reverberations of the stable clock striking a half-hour in the still air. It was the half-hour after midnight. The moon still slanted among the pines, and Jack followed his own shadow, with his beard splayed against his shirt-front, until within a few yards of his hut. Then he looked quickly up and about. But the hut was obviously intact; there was the moon twinkling on the padlock of which the key was in his pocket; and Jack returned instantly to his examination of the ground.

He was a very old bushman; he had a black-fellow's eye for a footprint, and he had struck a trail here which he knew to be recent and not his own. He followed it to the padlocked door, and round the hut and back to the door. He found the two heel-marks where the man had sat down there to think some matter over. Then he took out his key and went within, but left the door wide open; and while his back was still turned to it, for he could not find his matches, there was a slight noise there, and the moon's influx was stemmed by a man's body.

'Good-morning, Hunt,' said Jack, without turning round.

The tone, no less than the words, took the intruder all aback. He had planned a pretty surprise, only to receive a prettier for his pains.

'How do you know it's me?' he said aghast.

'By your voice,' was the reply; and the matches were found at last.

'But before that?'

'I expected you. Why didn't you go on sitting there with your back to the door?'

'You saw me!' cried Hunt, coming in.

'I saw your tracks. Hullo! Be good enough to step outside again.'

'I've come to talk to you.'—

'Quite so; but we'll talk outside.'

And Hunt had to go with what grace he might. Jack followed with a couple of camp-stools, pulled the door to, sat down on one of the stools, and motioned Hunt to the other. The great smooth face shook slowly in reply; and the moonlight showed a bulbous bruise between the eyes, which made its author frown and feel at fault.

'Yes, you may look!' said Hunt, through the gap in his set teeth which was a piece of the same handiwork. 'You hit hard enough, but I can hit

harder where it hurts more. A fine duke you are! Oh yes; double your fists again—do. But I'll bet you won't hit me this time; there's no one looking on!'

'Don't be too sure, my boy,' replied Jack. 'Don't you make any mistake!'

Hunt stuck a foot upon his camp-stool, and leaned forward over his knee.

'You recollect why you struck me to-night?'

'Perfectly.'

'Well, I deserved it—for being such a fool as to say what I had to say at a time like that. It was the drink said it, not me; I apologise again for saying it there, I apologise to you and me too. I was keeping it to say here.'

'Out with it,' said Jack, who to his own astonishment was preserving a perfect calm. And as he spoke he began to fill a pipe that he had brought out with the matches.

'One thing at a time,' said Hunt, producing a greasy bank-book. 'I'll out with this first. You may have heard that the old Duke had a kind of weakness for my folks?'

'I have heard something of the sort.'

'Then I'll trouble you to run your eye over this here passbook. It belongs to my old dad. It'll show you his account with the London and Provincial Bank at Devenholme. It's a small account. This here book goes back over ten years, and there's some blank leaves yet. But look at it for yourself; keep your eye on the left-hand page from first to last: and you'll see what you'll see.'

Jack did so; and what he saw on every left-hand page was this: 'per Maitland, £50.' There were other entries, 'by cheque' and 'by cash,' but they were few and small. Clearly Maitland was the backbone of the account. And a closer inspection revealed the further fact that his name appeared punctually every quarter, and always in connection with the sum of fifty pounds received.

'Ever heard of Maitland, Hollis, Cripps, & Company?' inquired Hunt.

Jack started; so this was the Maitland. 'They are my solicitors,' he said.

'They were the old Duke's too,' replied Hunt. 'Now have a look at the other side of the account. You know the Lower Farm; then look and see what we pay for the rent.'

'I know the figure,' said Jack, handing back the bank-book. 'It is half the value.'

'Less than half—though I say it! And what does all this mean—two hundred a year paid up without fail by Maitland, Hollis, Cripps, & Co., and the Lower Farm very near rent-free? It means,' said Hunt, leaning forward with an evil gleam on either side of his angry bruise—'it means that something's bought of us as doesn't appear! You can guess what for yourself. Our silence! Two hundred a year, and the Lower Farm at a nominal rent, all for keeping a solitary secret!'

'Then I should advise you to go on keeping it,' said Jack, with cool point; yet for all his nonchalance his heart was in flutter enough now; for he knew what was coming, and he was idly wondering how much or how little it surprised him.

'All very fine,' he heard Hunt saying—a long way off as it seemed to him—whereas he was really bending farther forward than before. 'All

very fine! But what if this secret has improved in value with keeping? Improved, did I say? Lord's truth, it's gone up a thousand per cent. in the last few weeks; and who do you suppose sent it up? Why, you! I'll tell you how. I dessay you can guess; still I'll tell you, then there'll be no mistakes. You've heard things of your father? You know the sort he was? You won't knock me down again for mentioning it, will you? I thought not! Well, when the Red Marquis, as they used to call him, was a young man about the house here, my old dad was in the stables; and my old dad's young sister was the Duchess's own maid—a slapping fine girl, they tell me, but she was dead before I can remember. Well, and something happened; something often does. But this was something choice. Guess what!

'He married her.'

'He did. He married her at the parish church of Chelsea, in the name of Augustus William Greville Maske, his real name all but the title; still, he married the girl.'

'Quite right, too!'

'Oh, quite right, was it? Stop a bit. You were born in 1855. You told me so yourself; you may remember the time, and you stake your life I don't forget it. It was the sweetest music I ever heard, was that there date! Shall I tell you why? Why, because them two—the Red Marquis and his mother's maid—were married on October 22d, 1853.'

'Well?'

Hunt took out a handful of the cigars which had been provided for all comers in the evening; he had filled his pockets with them; and now he selected one by the light of the setting moon, and lit it deliberately. Then he puffed a mouthful of smoke in Jack's direction, and grinned.

"Well," says you; and you may well "well!" For the Red Marquis deserted his wife and went out to Australia before he'd been married a month. And out there he married again. *But you were five years old, my fine fellow, before his first wife died and was buried in this here parish!* You can look at her tombstone for yourself. She died and was buried as Eliza Hunt; and just that much was worth two hundred a year to us for good and all; because, you see, I'm sorry to say she never had a child.

Both in substance and in tone this last statement was the most convincing of all. Here was an insolent exultation tempered by a still more insolent regret. And the very incompleteness of the triumph engraved it the deeper with the stamp of harsh reality.

Jack saw his position steadily in all its bearings. He was nobody. A little time ago he had stepped into Claude's shoes, but now Claude would step into his. Well, thank God that it was Claude! And yet—and yet—that saving fact made facts of all the rest.

'I've no doubt your yarn is quite true,' said Jack, still in a tone that amazed himself. 'But of course you have some proofs on paper?'

'Plenty.'

'Then why couldn't you come out with all this before?'

Hunt gave so broad a grin that a volume of smoke escaped haphazard from his gaping mouth.

'You'd punished me,' he said, admiring the red end of his cigar; 'I'd got you to punish in your

turn, and with interest. So I gave you time to get to like the old country in general, and this here spot in particular; to say nothing of coming the Duke; I meant that to grow on you too. I hope as I gave you time enough? This here hut don't look altogether like it, you know!'

Jack's right hand was caressing the loaded revolver in the breast-pocket of his dress-coat; it was the cold, solid power of the little living weapon that kept the man himself cool and strong in his extremity.

'Quite fair,' he remarked. 'Any other reason?'

'Why, certainly.'

'What was that?'

'Well, you see, it's like this'—and Hunt dropped his insolence for a confidential tone far harder to brook. 'It's like this,' he repeated, plumping down on the camp-stool in front of Jack: 'there's nobody knows of that there marriage but us Hunts. We've kep' it a dead secret for nearly forty years, and we don't want to let it out now. But, as I say, the secret's gone up in value. Surely it's worth more than two hundred a year to you? You don't want to be knocked sideways by that there Claude Lafont, do you? Yet he's the next man in. You'd never let yourself be chucked out by a chap like that?'

'That's my business. What's your price?'

'Two thousand.'

'A year?'

'Two thousand a year. Come, it's worth that to you if it's worth a penny-piece. Think of your income!'

'Think of yours. Two hundred on condition you kept a single secret! That was the condition, wasn't it?'

'Well?'

'You've let the secret out, you cur!' cried Jack, jumping to his feet. 'And you've lost your income by it for good and all. Two thousand! You'll never see another two hundred. What! did you take me for a dirty skunk like yourself? Do you think I got in this position through my own fault or of my own accord? Do you think I'm so sweet on it as to sit tight at the mercy of a thing like you? Not me! What you've told me to-night the real Duke and his lawyers shall hear to-morrow; and think yourself lucky if you aren't run in for your shot at a damnable conspiracy! Did you really suppose I cared as much as all that? Do you think—oh! for God's sake, clear out, man, before I do you any more damage!'

'Oh, you're good at that,' said Hunt, through the hole in his teeth. He had risen, and now he withdrew a few paces. 'You're not bad with your fists, you fool, but I've come prepared for you this time!' and he drew a knife; but the revolver covered him next instant.

'And I for you,' retorted Jack. 'I give you five seconds to clear out in. One—two—'

'My God, are there such fools?—'

'Three—four—'

The man was gone. At a safer range he stopped again to threaten and gloat, to curse and to coax alternately. But Jack took no more notice; he turned into the hut, flung the pistol on the table, and stood motionless until the railing died away. Yet he had heeded never a word of it, but was rather reminded that it had been by its very

cessation, as one notes the stopping of a clock. It made him look out once more, however; and, looking, he saw the last of Matthew Hunt in the moonlit spaces among the pines. His retreating steps died slowly away. The snapping of a twig was just audible a little after. And then in the mellow distance the stable-clock chimed and struck one; and again Jack found himself keeping an imaginary count of the reverberations until all was still.

He stood at the door a moment longer. The feathered barbs of the pine-trees were drawn in ink upon a starry slate. The night was as mild and clear and silent as many a one in the Riverina itself; and Jack tried to think himself there and to regard this English summer as the bushman's dream that he had so often imagined it here in his model bush hut. But his imagination was very stubborn to-night. The stately home which was not his rose in his mind's eye between him and the stars; once more he saw it illumined in a flash from spire to terrace; once more the portico columns marched forward as one man, while the six eagles of the ancient house flew out in the tympanum above; and though a purring arose from his feet, and something soft and warm rubbed kindly against his shins, he could no longer forget where he was and who he was not. He was not the Duke. He was the wrong man after all. And the hut that he had built and inhabited, as a protest against all this grandeur, was a monument of irony such as the hand of man had never reared in all the world before.

The wrong man! He flung himself upon the elaborately rude bed to grapple with those three words until he might grasp what they meant to himself. And as he lay, his little cat leaped softly up and purred upon his heart, as if it knew the aching need there of a sympathy beyond the reach of words.

Only one aspect of his case came home to him now, but that was its worst aspect. The life he was to lose mattered little after all. He might miss it more than he had once thought; it was probable he would but truly appreciate it when it was a life of the past, as is the way of a man. Yet even that could be borne. The losing of the girl was different and a million times worse. But lose her he must: for what was he now? Instead of a Duke a nobody; not even a decently-born peasant; a nameless husk of humanity, a derelict, a nonentity, the natural son of a notorious rake. Must he go back then to the bush, and back alone? Must he put himself beyond the reach of soft words and softer eyes for ever, and ever, and ever? He could feel again her little hand within his arm; and it was worse a hundredfold than the vision of the Towers lit from end to end by the light of a bursting rocket. Would not the grave itself—

Wait!

There was the pistol on the table. The pale light lay along the barrel. Jack held his breath and lay gazing at the faint gleam until it grew into a blinding sun that scorched him to the soul. And he hardly knew what he had done when Claude Lafont found him wandering outside with the hot pistol still in his hand.

Jack looked upon the breathless poet with dull eyes that slowly brightened; then he pressed the

spring, shot out the empty cartridges, blew through the hollow chambers, and handed the revolver back to Claude.

'I've no more use for it. I'm much obliged to you. No, I've done no damage with it; that's just the point. I was emptying it for safety's sake. I'm so sorry you heard. I—I *did* think of emptying it—through my own head.'

'In Heaven's name, why?'

'Only for a moment, though. It would have been a poor trick after all. Still I had to empty it first and see that afterwards.'

'But why? What on earth has happened?'

'I'm not the man after all.'

'What man?'

'The Duke of St Osmund's.'

And Claude was made to hear everything before he was allowed the free expression of his astonishment and incredulity. Then he laughed. His incredulity remained.

'My dear fellow,' he cried, 'there's not a word of truth in the whole story. It's one colossal fraud. Hunt's a blackguard. I wouldn't believe his oath in a court of justice.'

'What about the bank-book?'

'A fraud within a fraud!'

'Not it. I'll answer for that. Oh no; we could have inquired at the bank. Hunt's a blackguard, but no fool. And you know what my father was; from all accounts he wasn't the man to think twice about a little job like bigamy.'

'I wouldn't say that; few men of our sort would be so reckless in such a matter,' declared the poet. 'Now, from all I know of him, I should have said it was most inconsistent with his character to marry the girl at all. Everything but that! And surely it's quite possible to explain even that two hundred a year without swallowing such a camel as downright bigamy. My grandfather was a sort of puritanical monomaniac; even in the days of his mental vigour, I can remember him as a sterner moralist than any of one's schoolmasters or college dons. Then, too, he was morbidly sensitive about the family failings and traditions, and painfully anxious to improve the tone of our house. Bear that in mind, and conceive as gross a scandal as you like—but not bigamy. And do you mean to tell me that a man like my grandfather would have thought two hundred a year for all time too much to pay for hushing such a thing up for ever? Not he—not he!' There fell a heavy hand upon Claude's back.

'Claude, old boy, I always said you were a genius. Do you know, I never thought of that?'

'It's obvious; besides, there's the Eliza Hunt on the gravestone; I've seen it myself. But look here; I'll tell you what I'll do.'

'What, old man?'

'I'll run up to town to-morrow and see Maitland, Hollis, Cripps, & Co. about the whole matter. They've paid the money; they are the men to know all about it. Stop a moment! Hunt was clever enough to have an exact date for the marriage. What was it again?'

'October 22d, 1853.'

'I think he said Chelsea parish church?'

'He did.'

Claude scribbled a note of each point on his shirt-cuff.

'That's all I want,' said he. 'I'll run up by the first train, and back by the last. Meanwhile, take my word for it, you're as safe as the Queen upon her throne!'

'And you?' said Jack.

'Oh, never mind me; I'm very well as I am.'

Claude was fully conscious of his semi-heroic attitude; indeed he enjoyed it, as he had enjoyed many a less inevitable pose in his day. But that he could not help; and Jack was perhaps the last person in the world to probe beneath the surface of a kind action. His great hand found Claude's, and his deep voice quivered with emotion.

'I don't know how it is,' he faltered, 'but this thing has got at me more than I meant it to. Hark at that! Three o'clock; it'll be light before we know where we are; you won't leave a fellow till it is, will you? I'm in a funk! I've got to believe the worst till I know otherwise—that's all about it. The day I shan't mind tackling by myself, but for Heaven's sake don't go and leave me to-night. You've got to go in the morning; stop the rest of the night out here with me. You shall have the bunk and I'll doss down on the floor. I'll light the fire and brew a billy of tea this minute if only you'll stay with me now. Didn't you once say you'd have hold of my sleeve? And so you have had, old man, so you have had; only now's your time—more than ever.'

Claude was deeply moved by the spectacle of a stronger man than himself so stricken in every nerve. He looked very compassionately upon the eager open face. There were a few gray hairs about either temple, but in the faint starlight they looked perfectly white; and there were crow's-feet under the eyes that seemed to have escaped his attention till now. He consented to remain on one condition: he must go back and put out the lights and close the windows in the Poet's Corner. So Jack went with him; and those lights were the only sign of life in all the vast, dark expanse of ancient masonry, that still belonged to one of them, though they knew not now to which. It was this thought, perhaps, that kept both men silent on the terrace when the lights had been put out and the windows shut. Then Jack ran his arm affectionately through that of Claude, and together they turned their backs upon those debatable stones.

HOW RUSSIA AMUSES ITSELF.

By FRED WHISHAW,
Author of *Out of Doors in Tsarland*, &c.

If I were asked to state what a Russian school-boy does with his spare time after working hours are over, I should be much puzzled what to say.

Unfortunately young Russia has not the faintest glimmering of knowledge of the practice or even of the existence of such things as football, cricket, fives, rackets, golf, athletic sports, hockey, or any other of the numerous pastimes which play so important a part in the life of every schoolboy in this merry land of England. Therefore there is no question, for him, of staying behind at the school premises after working hours, in order to take part in any game. He goes home; that

much is certain; most of his time is loafed away—that, too, is beyond question. He may skate a little, perhaps, in the winter, if he happens to live near a skating ground, but he will not go far for it; and in the summer, which is holiday time for him from June till September, he walks up and down the village street clothed in white calico garments, or plays cup and ball in the garden; fishes a little, perhaps, in the river or pond if there happen to be one, and lazies his time away without exertion. Of late years 'lortenece,' as lawn-tennis is called in the Tsar's country, has been slightly attempted; but it is not really liked: too many balls are lost and the rules of the game have never yet been thoroughly grasped. A quartette of men will occasionally rig up their net, which they raise to about the height of a foot and a half, and play a species of battledore and shuttle-cock over it until the balls disappear; but it is scarcely tennis. As a matter of fact a Russian generally rushes at the ball and misses it; on the rare occasions when he strikes the object, he does so with so much energy that the ball, unless stopped by the adversary's eye, or his partner's, disappears for ever into 'the blue.' Croquet is a mild favourite, too; but it is played very languidly and unscientifically. Well do I remember a scene at the custom-house some years—a good many years, I fear—ago! I was a schoolboy at the time, and had arrived from England in order to spend the summer holidays in Russia. Among my impedimenta was a box of croquet paraphernalia which I had been commissioned to bring out for an English resident. At that time the game was as yet unknown to the country, and the custom-house authorities on opening the box retreated in horror and alarm when they beheld its awe-inspiring contents. Instruments of assault, bombs, mysterious weapons of every kind were contained in that awful box—not one of them would go near it! Amid exclamations of warning and horror, I drew forth one of the bombs and placed it upon the ground; then a second; to the accompaniment of cries of terror and consternation I took from the case a terrible weapon (known to croquet players as a mallet), and to the inexpressible alarm of all present I commenced a little exhibition-game of croquet upon the floor of the custom-house, in order to demonstrate the uses of the various implements. As the hoops could not well be utilised on the wooden boards, those innocent articles were gravely suspected. I believe the officials took them to be boomerangs of a novel and peculiar description, and the whole box was consequently detained for further and fuller investigation. I believe that they sunk it in deep water and sent down a scientifically-disposed diver to inspect it in safety. My friends got their croquet-set eventually, but the balls bore marks of careful testing; those officials had felt sure they were bombs, and had done their very best to convict them of containing dynamite.

Most gardens in Russian country houses contain a swing, a rotting horizontal bar for the gymnastically (and suicidally) inclined, and a giant-stride.

Occasionally there is a flower-bed in the centre, in which our dear old British friend, the rhubarb, monopolises the space, and makes a good show as an ornamental plant; for he is not known in that benighted country as a comestible, though, of course, children are acquainted with and hate him in his medicinal capacity. Besides the swings and the rhubarb, there are sand or gravel paths; and built out over the dusty road is an open summer-house, wherein the Muscovitish householder and his ladies love to sit and sip their tea for the greater part of each day—this being their acme of happiness. The dust may lie half-an-inch thick over the surface of their tea and bread and butter, but this does not detract from the delights of the fascinating occupation.

I should point out that in all I have said above, I refer not so much to the highest or to the lowest classes of Russian society, as to that middle stratum to which belong the families of the *Chinovnik*, of the infantry officer, or the well-to-do merchant. The aristocracy amuse themselves very much in the same way as our own. They shoot, they loaf and play cards in their clubs, they butcher pigeons out of traps, they have their race-meetings, they dance much and well; some have yachts of their own. Many of them keep English grooms, and their English—when they speak it—for this reason snacks somewhat of the stable, though they are not usually aware that this is the case. If a Russian aristocrat has succeeded in making himself look like an Englishman, and behaves like one, he is happy. I have known Russians who have made most excellent Englishmen, and should be glad to know more such.

Of winter sports—in which, however, but a small minority of the Russian youth care to take part—there are skating, ice-yachting, snow-shoeing, and ice-hilling. The skating ought, naturally, to be very good in Russia. As a matter of fact the ice is generally dead and lacking in that elasticity and spring which is characteristic of our English ice. It is too thick for elasticity, though the surface is beautifully kept and scientifically treated with a view to skating wherever a space is flooded or an acre or two of the Neva's broad bosom is reclaimed to make a skating ground. Some of the Russian amateurs skate marvellously, as also do many of the English and other foreign residents. Ice-yachting is confined almost entirely to these latter, the natives not having as yet awakened to the merits of this fine pastime. Ice-hilling, however, at fair-time—that is, during the carnival week preceding the 'long fast' or Lent—is much practised by the people. This is a kind of cross between the switchback and tobogganing, and is an exceedingly popular amusement among the English residents of St Petersburg, who support an Ice Hill Club of their own and repair to it weekly during the winter in order to amuse themselves by diving headlong adown the ice slopes, and to be amused by the attempts of novices to follow their example. I may assure my readers that ice-hilling is at once the most awe-inspiring to beginners, and the most charming of all sports to the expert that the mind of man can imagine. Snow-shoeing, again, is a fine and healthful recreation; it is the 'ski'-running of Norway, and is beloved and much

practised by all Englishmen who are fortunate enough to be introduced to its fascinations. It is too difficult and requires too much exertion, however, for young Russia, and that indolent individual, in consequence, rarely dons the snow-shoe. As I may perhaps describe both this pastime and the fierce joy of the ice-hills more fully in a subsequent paper, I shall merely state here that each of these is a pastime worthy of the gods, and one that would be immensely popular in England if there were only snow enough and frost enough to permit of its practice there.

The Russians are a theatre-loving people, and the acting must be very good to please their critical taste. Many of the theatres are 'imperial,' that is, the state 'pays the piper' if the receipts of the theatre so protected do not balance the expenditure. In paying for good artists, whether operatic or dramatic, the Russians are most lavish, and the Imperial Italian Opera must have been a source of considerable expense to the authorities in the days of its state endowment. I believe this branch of theatrical entertainment has now, however, deteriorated into a private enterprise.

Nearly every Russian is a natural musician, and can not only sing in tune, but can take a part 'by ear.' The man with the *balalaika* or *garmonka* is always sure of an admiring audience, whether in town or village; and there is not a tiny hamlet in the empire but resolves itself, on holidays, into a pair of choral societies—one for male and one for female voices—which either parade up and down the village street, singing, without, of course, either conductor or accompaniment, or sit in rows upon the benches outside the huts, occupied in a similar manner.

Occasionally, but very rarely, you may see a party of Russian children, or young men and women, playing, in the open air, at one of two games. The first is a variant of 'prisoner's base;' the other is a species of ninepins, or skittles, played with a group of uprights at which short, thick clubs are thrown. The Russian youth—those who are energetic enough to practise the game—sometimes attain considerable proficiency with these grim little weapons, and make wonderful shots at a distance of some thirty yards or so. But while the Russian or any other youth is studying the art of projecting the missiles, which are quite heavy enough to break a head or a shin if the proprietor happened to be 'knocking around' within a short walk, it is as well to take up one's abode in an adjoining parish and to get behind a good substantial building, say a church, for the game-playing Russian is erratic to a fault in the early stages of his initiation into the mysteries of any kind of pastime requiring skill.

As for the middle-class Russian sportsman, he forms a class by himself, and is a very original person indeed, unless taught the delights of the chase by an Englishman. In his eyes the be-all and end-all of a true sportsman is to purchase the orthodox equipment of green-trimmed coat, Tyrolean hat, and long boots, and to pay his subscription to a shooting club. He rarely discharges a gun; the rascally thing kicks, he finds; and the birds will fly before he can point his weapon at them as they crouch in the heather at his feet; of course he is not such a fool as to fire after they are up and away. As a rule, how-

ever, he goes no farther afield than the card-table of the club-house. Why should he? He has bought all the clothes; what more does a man need to be a sportsman? I cannot honestly affirm that I ever saw one of these good fellows actually fire off his gun; for whenever I have been informed that such an event is about to take place I have always done my best to place two or three good miles, or a village or two, between myself and the Muscovitish 'sportsman.'

THE TAPESTRIES OF ALTRANA.

CHAPTER II.

His perspicacity was not at fault, although his suspicions were appeased, when, a quarter of an hour afterwards, he saw Don Tomás pass up the street carrying the keys in his hand, but alone and unaccompanied by the now (to Tío José) odious stranger. If he could have watched what passed when Don Tomás had let himself into the church and carefully relocked the doors, he would at once have realised that his vague suspicions were but too well founded. When the priest found himself alone and the heavy door barred against all intrusion, he mopped his brow with his cotton handkerchief. From whatever motive, he had expected opposition from his sacristan. Then he stole softly across the church. He lifted his hat, and made the usual genuflections before the high altar. As he moved towards the door, his eye was caught by the life-size figure of a Christ which hung on the wall in front of him. It was generally concealed by a curtain, but to-day by some chance it had been left undrawn. It was one of those tremendous representations of the Passion in which the Catholic Church of Spain displays all its genius, all its startling realism, all its powers and terrors, and all its tenderness. It would have been difficult for even an indifferent spectator to confront this tall, pale figure with its agonised and livid face and bleeding feet without an emotion of some sort, of terror, awe, compassion—it may be, even of disgust—piercing through the blankness of his soul. To those who gazed on it under the influence of strong feeling, it seemed that its speechless voice responded to their mood, and spoke to them even as they longed, or hoped, or feared. To the perturbed and guilty conscience of the priest it seemed that the Christ looked straight towards him—through him even—stern and threatening, so stern and threatening that his own eyes quailed for a moment under the menace. He paused and mopped his brow again. 'It's a risk,' he muttered to himself, 'a terrible risk. If it gets wind, it means ruin. But how can it? Even José suspects nothing! I know him well. If he had, the old fool would not have given up the keys. And who else is there? No one has seen him; he came to my door under the cover of night. Encarnación is deaf and almost blind, and there was no living soul there but myself and him. *Caramba!* What do I fear—a spectre—a bogey?'

At this point, unconsciously to himself, his eyes again sought the Christ, this time with

defiance. 'I want the money, and I *must* have it. After all, they are only a few old hangings mouldering in a corner, but *Viva Dios!* I will bargain like a damned man for them. The old rogue shall pay my price, and every penny of it!' Still those awful eyes were bent straight on his with menacing disapproval. With a resolute gesture he crossed to where the figure was, and drew the curtain. He then stole almost timidly to the end of the aisle, and fitted one of the keys into a lateral door which gave into a lane. The key was not rusty—the sacristan took too much care of it for that—but the lock, being rarely if ever used, was. After several unsuccessful efforts he again mopped his brow, and walked quickly to the sacristy. He looked for some oil. There was none but the consecrated oil contained in the sacred vessels. With this and a quill pen he lubricated the wards of the lock, and again tried the key. This time it entered easily enough. He wrapped his handkerchief around the handle to get more purchase, and after a strong effort it clicked sharply in the lock, and the door was open. From the outer sunlight glided in, like a serpent, the angular form of the old antiquary. The priest carefully relocked the door, assured himself that he had done so, and wiped all traces of the oil from the outside of the lock. In silence the two then walked across the church to the door opening on the spiral staircase which led to the treasure-chamber. There the priest unbarred the heavy shutters, letting in the sunlight in a flood. The golden rays glittered on the knights' armour, lighting up the warriors' faces with an ethereal glow of exultation, thrilled the fair faces of the ladies trailing their long robes through the tall lilies with something of the spiritual, if not the material, glow of life. If all this triumphant movement, this mimicry of action, had surprised him the night before, seen by the flickering of a taper amidst the shadows of night, the fine amber light of morning revealed still more beauties, and details still more marvellous. The antiquary stood and gazed in silence. His face was mute, impassive. Not a twitch of his eye, no movement of the lips betrayed his eagerness, his thoughts, or his desires. For all the priest could gather from it, he might have had before him the countenance of a dead man. 'No,' Baldomero said quietly and impassively, 'not a farthing more than fifty thousand dollars, as I said last night.' The priest's eyes glowed like embers with covetousness. 'Say the double,' he said, 'and you shall have them, the whole lot, those in the chest, and those you see hanging there.'

It would be too long and too nauseous to rehearse the whole of the miserable scene that followed. What seemed, perhaps, only legitimate business to the antiquary, was robbery and sacrilege to the priest. After an hour's long sordid wrangling the bargain was struck; seventy-five thousand dollars to be handed in their integrity, either in metal or bank-notes, to the confidential messenger who carried the tapestries to Madrid. The priest urged caution. It was a business of life and death. On no account should Don Baldomero be seen about in the town again. He must lie hidden in his, the priest's house, until the evening, and leave secretly under the cover of night. Don Tomás himself would make all the arrangements.

'Remember,' he added, 'should this come to the ears of the Duchess or the Bishop of Cuenca, I am a lost man. And not only that, my friend,' he concluded with a cunning twinkle in his eyes, 'but what is worse for you, you would lose your money. You know the law in cases such as these.'

Don Baldomero swore willingly the most absolute, undying secrecy. He felt already in his hands the fifty thousand dollars which was the very least he hoped to net by the transaction. As they passed before the high altar, Don Tomás, still nervous, bade him kneel and swear that 'it shall be kept secret by Him before you,' and Don Baldomero kneeling limply, swore. As the latter disappeared into the sunlit lane by the same lateral door by which he had entered, the priest with his fingers on his lips uttered the one word 'Remember!'

Three days afterwards, Don Tomás, the priest, said as if accidentally to José, the sacristan:

'By the way, those old tapestries in the chapter-room are getting more dilapidated every day. Only to-day I received a letter from the Duchess, and she asks specially about them. Really one ought to do something in the way of getting them cleaned and mended; the Duchess gives me the name of a man in Paris, who cleans things of that sort and makes them as good as new. I think I shall have them packed and sent to him.'

'Without getting the permission of her Grace?' inquired the sacristan apparently naively enough and in all simplicity. An ugly shadow crossed the priest's face. 'Did I not tell you,' he said tartly, 'that her Grace herself gives the address of the person they are to go to. Who would dare to send them away, even for their benefit, without her Grace's permission?' Then more peremptorily, 'You had better get them taken down, so that Simón may take the measurements for the cases. They shall go at once. The last time the women in the town mended them, and a fine botch they made of it! No, no; no more rough darning for me. Wherever they placed their fingers, there you will find an ugly disfigurement.'

Tío José said nothing. He insisted on taking the tapestries down himself. 'Whatever becomes of them,' he muttered, 'they shall have no more ugly rents in them if I can help it.' He himself assisted Simón to fold them, and when they lay, heavy dusty heaps on the chapter-house floor, his heart was heavy as if they had been living things. With angry face and gloomy brow, he watched them one by one as they were piled up in the cases, and Simón nailed up the lids, and then, beside himself with rage and grief, he went to the Duchess of Altrana's steward.

'Well, what is it?' said that worthy, as Tío José stood humbly before him twirling his hat between his trembling fingers. He could not have stood more humbly before the Duchess herself, for the steward was omnipotent in Altrana. It had been the sacristan's intention to ask straight out whether the priest really was acting by her Grace's orders or not. But it was not so easy to do in the presence of this almighty steward as it had been out of it. Nevertheless, he told his story as best he could, how he feared there was something wrong about the tapestries in the church. How a stranger had come about a week ago—here the steward uttered an involuntary exclamation, instantly suppressed—and he, José, like

a fool, had shown him the hangings in the treasure chamber. How, when he had seen them and left the church, he had asked María, the tailor's wife, where Don Tomás the cura lived, and if it was far to the parróquia. How next morning, early, Don Tomás sent for the keys of the church, a most unusual thing, for in the whole thirty years or more he had been sacristan of Altrana, he had never asked for the keys before, but always sent for him, José, to open the church. How about four days ago, Don Tomás had said the tapestries were dirty and wanted mending, and that he was going to send them away to Paris de Francia, and thereupon had sent for Simón the carpenter to make the cases for them. How at this very moment the tapestries were all packed and nailed up, and the cases lying in the sacristy.

Señor Don Rufino Perez listened to the sacristan's story with apparently but little interest; when he had finished, he said, with apathetic indifference: 'Don Tomás is a good man. Perhaps he has heard from the Duchess and has received her orders. I cannot say. The Duchess generally writes to him direct when she has any wishes to express about the church. You are making mountains out of molehills, friend José. Fancy putting yourself into such a state for a few old tattered hangings, at most of little value!'

'A few old tattered hangings,' cried Tío José passionately, and in spite of his respect for the great man, he brought his hand with a bang on to the table before him, as if to give added force to his words. 'Why, señor, you must be dreaming. And that to me, José Delgado, who have been sacristan of this church for more than thirty years, as were my father and grandfather before me, may they rest in peace! Those tapestries, sir, are the treasure of Altrana. There are none to be compared to them in Spain; so said my father and grandfather. Ay! señor, I know better than you what they are worth. The bishop, the last time he was here, said that his church only envied Altrana one thing—its tapestries—and that if people knew about them, they would flock to see them as they do in other places, and I might make my fortune showing them.'

'Amigo! Calm yourself,' said the steward, 'calm yourself. I will myself see Don Tomás no later than to-night about them. I am certain everything is right. It is a very ugly accusation to bring against any man, and that man your own priest, that he is selling or sending away, or even capable of selling and sending away, things that belong to the church. And that is what your violence would lead me to infer. Listen to a word of advice, Amigo José; let no breath of what you have said to me just now reach the ears of another living soul, or it will be the worse for you.'

Tío José stood in moody silence. A word from the man before him, and he might lose not only his position in the church, but also the only other means he had of getting a bit of bread to put in his own and his wife's mouth. If he quarrelled with the steward, the latter was quite capable, as he had done before with others, of ousting him from the cherished fields outside the town which he and Tía María had cultivated for years by the sweat of their brow.

Tío José had all the Spaniard's caution. 'All I wanted to know, señor,' he muttered at last, 'was whether Don Tomás has your permission to send the tapestries away?'

The steward put his thumbs in the button-holes of his waistcoat, and leaned back in his chair, with a pompous air of satisfaction. He liked the sense of power.

'*Tanto cómo eso*' (So much as that), he made answer, 'Don Tomás has no permission of mine, but I doubt not the matter is all right. Calm yourself, Amigo José; there is a satisfactory explanation for everything, and be sure that nothing shall happen to harm the interests of the family, so long as I am its representative in Altrana.'

There was nothing for Tío José to do, with that veiled threat still buzzing in his ears, but to beg the steward to keep his secret. The righter of other people's wrongs had met the fate that generally befalls him, and been forced to own himself in the wrong. He retired downcast and crestfallen, but ten times more suspicious and disquieted than he was before. Had he known that barely a quarter of an hour later the steward was closeted with the priest, and could he have heard the words which passed between them as they parted, his worst fears would have been realised.

'*Ea!* Don Tomás, so it's all right, eh? Five thousand dollars for me, and the rest for the benefit of the church.' Here came a snigger, and then the priest's answer, 'Go without care; you shall have the five thousand dollars in your hand within a week from to-day.'

The Duchess of Altrana was in bed, in the hideous conglomeration of brick, stucco, and windows known as a 'chalet' which she had built for herself at Pau. She had just finished breakfast, when her maid brought in her letters.

One after another her Grace opened and tossed them aside. But amongst them was one in a dirty Spanish envelope. It was addressed in the unformed hand of a peasant, but what drew her attention more particularly to it was that she noticed it bore the post-mark of Altrana.

'Some beggar wanting charity, or some more complaints about that rogue Perez,' she exclaimed superciliously as she opened it rather gingerly with a paper-knife.

She skimmed over the first page carelessly enough and without interest. It contained the compliments of the humble addressed to the great and powerful, but when she turned the page and read on, the indifference turned into very real agitation and anxiety. She rang the bell hurriedly and several times. Her maid appeared. 'Bring me some telegraph forms and at once,' she said sharply and with authority. They were brought in a moment, and the French maid wondered what could possibly have happened to drag her mistress from her usual state of supercilious calm. The Duchess read and re-read the letter, and her olive skin grew white and red by turns as she read and re-read. It bore the impress of truth, and was signed by her humble servant, who kissed her feet—José Delgado y Vazquez, Sacristán of her Grace's Collegiate Church of Altrana. Those who ascribed to the Duchess all the graces of a Frenchwoman would have been astounded if they could have heard her mutter between

clenched teeth in her native Spanish: 'Ah! the thieves, ah! the abominable lying thieves, ah! Ladrones, stealers of the Sacraments!'

Simón, the carpenter of Altrana, had been busy all day nailing up the cases which were to carry away the famous tapestries of Altrana, and they had been borne down from the treasure-chamber, and deposited close to the lateral door of the church. Everything was ready. The priest's mule was standing saddled and bridled in the stable underneath his house. A brace of revolvers were concealed beneath his cassock. He was himself to be the confidential messenger to take them to Madrid. Rogues rarely have faith in the integrity of others, and if they have, they are no longer rogues but fools: that was the priest's opinion.

Still in the immense gloom of the dusky aisle which the feeble flame from an oil lamp standing on the pavement made still more immense, still more terrifying, he could not help being strangely perturbed. At times he paced to and fro past the great wooden boxes, at other times he bent his head forward to listen. Simón, at his ease, squatted on one of the cases, smoked cigarettes, spitting on the floor with imperturbable indifference. He was quite prepared to stay there all night if he was paid for it. At last a creaking of wheels woke up the silent lane. The priest opened the side-door. 'Thank God! the carts are there. In ten minutes more all will be safe. In a quarter of an hour they will be creaking along with those great white cases which had been lying like a load on him all day, safely inside, in the silent night to Madrid, and then'—the priest unconsciously clicked his lips.

It took all the united strength of Simón, the muleteers, and the priest himself to lift the heavy cases. The first stuck in the narrow doorway, and the men panted and groaned, and the perspiration rained off the brow of Don Tomás as they tried to extricate it. At last it was deposited in the street. Don Tomás had planned the whole arrangements with unerring foresight. Night had fallen, and it was rarely, if ever, that a passer-by came that way in the daytime, much less at night, for it was an uncanny place and grim with the legend of a fearful murder that had been committed there long ago.

The muleteers paused beside their burden for a moment's breathing space ere they shouldered it into the cart, when a stentorian voice raised the echoes of the silent lane.

'*En el nombre de la ley!*' (In the name of the law!). One of the muleteers took to his heels and fled. None of the carts belonged to him. Besides, he was a *padre de familias*, and had certain unpleasant reminiscences of certain other *démêlés* he had had with the law before. The rest remained motionless, their faces transfixed in blank, open-mouthed astonishment. Looming out of the darkness appeared the figure of the Alcalde bearing his insignia of office, the gold-headed wand and tassels, with an assumption of more importance and dignity than he had ever made before. Behind him was his bodyguard, the municipality of the town, and they again were followed by a crowd of men, women, and children.

The priest stood in the doorway irresolute. He, too, like the hireling muleteer, would have

fled, but fear sealed his footsteps. His face was livid.

'What is this?' the Alcalde inquired gravely. 'What is this, and what contraband goods, in the name of God, are leaving our church of Altrana this night? Honest men work in the daytime and openly. Here, you,' turning to the muleteers, 'take this case into the church again. If you can't do it yourselves, I myself will lend you a hand.' Here every member of the municipality pushed forward, and behind them, with ringing cheers and indescribable shouts, the mob. For once in his life and term of office the Alcalde became a popular hero!

'Now, Señor Cura,' he said, 'a few words with you. With all respect, I am commanded by superior orders that I cannot evade to open these cases.' The Alcalde looked at the cura significantly, and a twinkle shone in the eyes which gleamed out of his stolid face, which might have been cut out of brown mahogany. Then taking him by the arm they paced together down the aisle. 'Señor Cura,' he said when they had got out of earshot, 'Señor Cura, I wish to be well with all men, more especially with you, for whom I have a profound respect. It has got wind in the town that the tapestries, the famous tapestries from the treasure-chamber, are in those cases, but I do not believe all I hear. To-night the people were on the eve of a revolution. It has taken all my authority to prevent them assaulting the church doors to see if their tapestries were safe. If they had, there would have been bloodshed. They are particularly violent against you' (the priest became as pale as death). 'Now, Señor Cura, listen to me. My orders (but they must be obeyed; there is no evading them) are to take an exact inventory of all the jewels, tapestries, and relics of this church, and to see that none are missing. I am, at the same time, strictly enjoined to avoid all unnecessary scandal. Now, I do not know what is in those cases. Listen, it is late' (here he took out his watch, and pointed to the hands with a tobacco-stained finger). 'Send the carts away under any pretext, lock the church doors, and whatever is in those cases' (here he made an elaborate and exquisite gesture of depreciation and apology) 'have them unpacked by the first light to-morrow, for to-morrow, according to my formal orders, I must take the inventory of the church treasures, *y tan amigos*' (as great friends as ever). 'In the meantime, I will persuade the people to go quietly home, which they will do when I tell them that I have seen their tapestries mouldering away on the walls of the treasure-chamber just as they always were.'

When the wheels of the carts had creaked down the lane, leaving it to silence, the Alcalde saluted the priest, and swept the ground with his hat.

'Good-night, Señor Cura, until to-morrow,' and as the priest locked the church door upon his receding figure, he muttered low to the Duchess's steward, who was one of the municipality's chief lights, '*Que demonio!*' (What a rogue!) 'These Levites would give points to the very devil.'

On the morrow, when he took the inventory of the church, the Alcalde gravely ticked off the tapestries of the treasure-chamber, and not so much as a movement of his face indicated that he was surprised to find them in their accustomed

place. On the contrary, with great urbanity and politeness, he continued his inventory of the rest of the treasures in the sacristy, and complimented the priest on their careful conservation.

SOME BIRDS AND THEIR WAYS.

It is somewhat curious and interesting to think that in ancient times affairs of importance, either of public or private concern, were seldom undertaken without first consulting the movements of feathered bipeds. From Hesiod we gather that in his day (eight or nine centuries before Christ) Greek husbandry and agricultural operations were almost entirely regulated by means of observations taken from the chattering, singing, feeding, and flight of birds. But it was amongst the Romans that the art of prognosticating future events by the agency of feathered animals was made into a system, and the superstitious belief in the foreknowledge of birds of the air was so unhesitating that those to whom it was given to understand their oracles held a very important place in the Roman state. However absurd such an institution as a college of augurs would appear in our eyes, yet, like all other institutions, it had in some degree its origin from nature. When men considered the wonderful migration of birds, how they disappeared at certain seasons of the year and appeared again at stated times, and could give no guess where they went, it was almost natural for the ignorant and credulous to suppose that they retired somewhere out of the sphere of this earth, and perhaps approached the ethereal regions, where they might converse with the gods and thus acquire the gift of predicting future events. Add to this the disposition of some birds to imitate the human voice, their power of mimicry and imitation of peculiar sounds, and the mysterious instinct and intelligence so often noticed in many varieties of the feathered creation. Many savage peoples all over the world—Kalmucks, Malays, Polynesians, Calabar negroes, Brazilian Indians—still regulate their proceedings by the flight of birds to right or left, the motions of hawks, the hooting of an owl, or the not more melodious cry of the great kingfisher. And amongst ourselves there are even yet not a few who count with some misgivings the precise number of magpies in view—one, two, three, or four.

Some illustrations of the curious faculties and habits of some birds will perhaps help us more clearly to understand how such fanciful notions might easily and naturally originate in the minds of superstitious people. The 'piping crow' is named from its ready mimicry of other birds; whilst its imitation of the cackling of a hen and the crowing of a cock is almost perfect. On the northern coasts of Ireland may occasionally be noticed hundreds of crows feeding on mussels and crabs, which they gather from the rocks and, curious to say, drop from a height of sixty to one hundred and twenty feet on the hard stone beneath, in order to break the shells. The crafty and thievish habits of the crow are well known. In the twenty-fourth year of Henry VIII. an act was passed to promote the destruction of this par-

ticular species on account of its alleged malicious and destructive powers. How the unhappy bird managed to survive the storm is a mystery, but weather it he did, as there are now more crows in Britain than in any other European country.

Among other birds possessing wonderful powers of imitation may be mentioned the bullfinch, which learns to whistle tunes, to sing in parts, and even pronounce words distinctly; the Chinese starling, which imitates words and musical sounds; and the great-billed butcher bird of Australia, which imitates the notes of some other birds, and thus decoys them to their destruction.

The mischievousness and cunning of the magpie is proverbial. There is a story told of a tame magpie which was seen busily employed in a garden gathering pebbles, and, with much solemnity and a studied air, dropping them into a hole about eighteen inches deep, made to receive a post. After dropping each stone, it cried 'Currack!' triumphantly, and set off for another. On examining the spot, a poor toad was found in the hole, which the magpie was stoning for his amusement. We are told by Linnæus that the martin dwells on the outside of houses in Europe, under the eaves; and that when it has built its nest, the sparrow frequently takes possession of it. The martin, unable to dislodge his enemy, convokes his companions, some of whom guard the captive, while others bring clay with which they completely close up the entrance of the nest; they then fly away, leaving the sparrow to be suffocated or starved to death.

For some years the writer occupied a cottage near Esher. Under the trellised porch was a martin's nest, which had been repaired every season for at least three years, and from which a brood of four or five young birds took their flight year by year. The porch was covered with zinc, and the nest was built against the wall, close against the angle formed by the slanting sides of the roof. One morning, before the brood was hatched, one of the old birds was found in the porch dead, owing probably to the unusual heat of the sun shining upon the zinc covering, which was only a few inches above the nest. Opposite the porch, and separated from it by the width of the garden walk, was an arch of wire covered with roses and honeysuckles. About eleven o'clock on the morning of the day when the bird had been found dead, the writer's attention was attracted by an unusual twittering, and looking towards the porch, he observed a martin, which he presumed to be the male bird, flying in and out of the porch on to the arch, and evidently endeavouring to coax another bird into his snug quarters. After a while the second martin took several short flights, and dived under the porch along with her companion, who twittered and flew round her in a state of the greatest excitement. This continued for about half-an-hour, until the stranger took possession of the nest, where she finally hatched the brood.

The following anecdote, communicated by Mr R. Ball to the author of Thomson's *Irish Birds*, is a curious illustration of the remark-

able sagacity of the raven. A tame raven, kept by some schoolboys, was very attentive in watching their cribs or bird-traps, and when a bird was taken, the raven endeavoured to catch it by turning back the top of the trap with its beak; but in so doing the bird always escaped, as the raven could not let go the crib in time to seize it. After several vain attempts of this kind, the raven, seeing another bird caught, instead of going at once to the trap, went to another tame raven, and induced it to accompany him. When the second raven lifted up the crib, the other bore the poor captive off in triumph.

There is a very remarkable cockatoo found in one of the islands of the Indian Ocean, near New Guinea; it is as large as a full-grown pheasant, and of a jet black colour. The bird is distinguished for its immensely strong bill, and the clever manner in which it uses this tool. The bill seems as hard as steel, and the upper part has a deep notch in it. Now the favourite food of this cockatoo is the kernel of the canary-nut; but there is wonderful ingenuity required to get at it; for the nut is something like a Brazil nut, only ten times as hard. In fact, it requires the blow of a heavy hammer to crack it; it is quite smooth and triangular in shape. The cockatoo might throw the nut down, but it would not break, or it might hold it in its claws as parrots usually do with their food, and attempt to crush it; but the smoothness of the nut would cause it to fly out of the beak. Nature, however, appears to have given the possessor of the wonderful bill an almost miraculous intelligence to direct its powers; for the cockatoo takes one of the nuts edgewise in its bill, and by a sawing motion of its sharp lower mandible makes a small notch on it. This done, the bird takes hold of the nut with its claws, and biting off a piece of leaf, retains it in the deep notch of the upper part of the bill. Then the nut is seized between the upper and lower parts of the bill and is prevented slipping by the peculiar texture of the leaf. A sharp nip or two in the notch breaks off a tiny piece of the shell of the nut. The bird then seizes the nut in its claws and pokes the long sharp point of its bill into the hole, and picks out the kernel bit by bit. The cockatoo has a very long tongue, which collects each morsel as it is broken off by the bill. This is without doubt a wonderful process, for it is quite clear that without the leaf nothing can be done, and it proves how certain structures in birds are made to destroy certain parts of plants.

A bird most highly esteemed in Egypt and other Eastern countries is the vulture; in some places stringent laws protect this unsightly creature, and heavy penalties await its assailant. In England we pay scavengers to cleanse our towns, and the police indict the man who encumbers the foot-path with putrid matter. The vulture saves all this trouble; he, considerate bird, stoops from his aerial height to become the purifier of cities. He is more effective than a whole college of physicians and a board of health; for he prefers carrion to fresh meat; and putrid substances which would quickly taint the air are borne off by the vulture the instant any official

or offensive matter is thrown into the street. The birds descend in crowds, and the nuisance is at once removed. In warm climates the vultures may be observed soaring high in air, and circling over a city on the watch, and no prey, however small, escapes their observation. In some parts of America vast quantities of large animals are killed for their hides only; there naturally the keen-eyed vultures descend, and quickly leave nothing of the largest buffalo save the bones, thus thoroughly and expeditiously removing so prolific a source of pestilence.

Among the numerous birds in Ceylon there are few more remarkable than the 'Virginian horned owl.' As soon as evening draws on, and mankind retire to rest, he sends forth such sounds as seem scarcely to belong to this world, 'making night hideous' with his loud and sudden cries of 'Waugh O, Waugh O.' He has other nocturnal solos, no less melodious, one of which very strikingly resembles the half-suppressed scream of a person suffocating or throttled. The Kandians consider the cry of this owl as a presage of death or misfortune, unless they adopt a charm to avert its fatal summons.

Humboldt describes a visit to the Caripe valley in Venezuela, and gives an interesting account of the 'guacharo' birds which make their home in a celebrated cavern of enormous size, and are reputed, by the natives, to possess infernal powers. The cavern was represented as of fathomless dimensions, and in its gloomy depths are supposed to roam the spirits of departed ancestors. The birds are about the size of our common fowl, but having wings expanding to three and a half feet. As the traveller approaches the cave the hoarse cries of the guacharo birds begin to make themselves heard, and, on his proceeding a little way into the interior, the noise is perfectly terrific—thousands of the birds uttering their piercing cries simultaneously. These screams echo and re-echo from the surrounding walls, and when it is remembered that the place is in pitchy darkness, it will be easy to understand the superstitious terrors which the Indians associate with its ghostly inmates, who dwell all day long in the cavern, and only come forth like the owls at the witching hour of night. In fact, the natives stand in such awe of these birds that nothing will induce the ordinary Indian to advance beyond a short distance into the cave. They maintain that the guacharos have daily intercourse with the bad spirit, and are the living embodiment of everything that is hateful and wicked. Yet this bird, though sufficiently curious, is as innocent of such evil communications as any other, and is in fact a harmless frugivorous fowl, chiefly remarkable for the preternatural fatness of the young birds. The parent birds live mainly on oily nuts, and the young are so ridiculously fat that once a year the Indians brave the terrors of the dark caverns to capture and slaughter for their oil these little lumps of fat. The small creatures are melted into grease over fires at the mouth of the caves; and the oil, gathered into pats, will keep for years, and is used both for cooking and for lamps. The guacharo is now known to inhabit Ecuador, Colombia, and Trinidad (where it is prized for the table). It is now frequently called

Oil-bird—technically *Steatornis*; and in its nocturnal habits and some other features (though not in its nut-eating) it resembles the goatsucker.

In striking contrast to the bird of ill omen thus described by Humboldt is the gorgeous bird of paradise. As an ornament of beauty and grace, the bird of the sun—or bird of God, as it is sometimes called by the people of Ternate—stands unrivalled, and no bird has given rise to more romantic and fabulous tales; such, for instance, as the ridiculous assertion that the bird of paradise lives all its life long on the wing and in the air, and is born without legs. The natives of Gilolo and New Guinea have a curious custom of cutting off the legs of all dead birds of paradise offered for sale or barter, and this may have given rise to the legend as to the bird being without legs. The true reason, however, for this peculiar operation is that the birds are supposed to be much better preserved, and the natives are also enabled to more easily wear them as ornaments to their helmets in mock-battles.

AT THE RISING OF THE WATERS.

By JOHN BUCHAN.

In mid September the moors are changing from red to a dusky brown, as the fire of the heather wanes, and the long grass yellows with advancing autumn. Then, too, the rain falls heavily on the hills, and vexes the shallow, upland streams, till every glen is ribbed with its churning torrent. This for the uplands; but below, at the rim of the plains, where the glens expand to vales, and trim fields edge the wastes, there is wreck and lamentation. The cabined waters lip over cornland and meadow, and bear destruction to crop and cattle.

This is the tale of Robert Linklater, farmer in Clachlands, and the events which befell him on the night of September 20th, in the year of grace 1880. I am aware that there are characters in the countryside which stand higher in repute than his, for imagination and a love of point and completeness in a story are qualities which little commend themselves to the prosaic. I have heard him called 'Leein' Rob,' and answer to the same with cheerfulness; but he was wont in private to brag of minutest truthfulness, and attribute his ill name to the universal dullness of man.

On this evening he came home, by his own account, from market about the hour of six. He had had a week of festivity. On the Monday he had gone to a distant cattle-show, and on Tuesday to a marriage. On the Wednesday he had attended upon a cousin's funeral, and, being flown with whisky, brought everlasting disgrace upon himself by rising to propose the health of the bride and bridegroom. On Thursday he had been at the market of Gledsmuir, and, getting two shillings more for his ewes than he had reckoned, returned in a fine fervour of spirit and ripe hilarity.

The weather had been shower and blast for days. The gray skies dissolved in dreary rain, and on that very morn there had come a down-pour so fierce that the highways ran like a hill-side torrent. Now, as he sat at supper and looked

down at the green vale and red waters leaping by bank and brae, a sudden fear came to his heart. Hitherto he had had no concern—for was not his harvest safely inned? But now he minds of the laigh parks and the nowt beasts there, which he had bought the week before at the sale of Inverforth. They were Kyloe and Galloway mixed, and on them, when fattened through winter and spring, lay great hopes of profit. He gulped his meal down hurriedly, and went forthwith to the garden-foot. There he saw something that did not allay his fears. Gled had split itself in two, at the place where Clachlands water came to swell its flow, and a long, gleaming line of black current stole round by the side of the laigh meadow, where stood the huddled cattle. Let but the waters rise a little, and the valley would be one uniform, turgid sea.

This was pleasing news for an honest man after a hard day's work, and the farmer went grumbling back. He took a mighty plaid and flung it over his shoulders, chose the largest and toughest of his many sticks, and set off to see wherein he could better the peril.

Now, some hundreds of yards above the laigh meadow, a crazy wooden bridge spanned the stream. By this way he might bring his beasts to safety, for no nowt could hope to swim the red flood. So he plashed through the dripping stubble to the river's brink, where, with tawny swirl, it licked the edge of banks which in summer weather stood high and flower-decked. Ruefully he reflected that many good palings would by this time be whirling to a distant sea.

When he came to the wooden bridge he set his teeth manfully and crossed. It creaked and swayed with his weight, and dipped till it all but touched the flow. It could not stand even as the water was, for already its mid prop had lurched forward, like a drunken man, and was groaning at each wave. But if a rise came, it would be torn from its foundations like a reed, and then heigh-ho! for cattle and man.

With painful haste he laboured through the shallows which rimmed the haughlands, and came to the snake-like current which had even now spread itself beyond the laigh meadow. He measured its depth with his eye and ventured. It did not reach beyond his middle, but its force gave him much ado to keep his feet. At length it was passed, and he stood triumphant on the spongy land, where the cattle huddled in mute discomfort and terror.

Darkness was falling, and he could scarcely see the homestead on the affronting hillside. So with all speed he set about collecting the shivering beasts, and forcing them through the ring of water to the bridge. Up to their flanks they went, and then stood frowning helplessly. He saw that something was wrong, and made to ford the current himself. But now it was beyond him. He looked down at the yellow water running round his middle, and saw that it had risen, and was rising inch by inch with every minute. Then he glanced to where aforetime stood the crazy planking of the bridge. Suddenly hope and complacency fled, and the gravest fear settled in his heart; for he saw no bridge, only a ragged, saw-like end of timber where once he had crossed.

Here was a plight for a solitary man to be in at nightfall. There would be no wooden bridge on all the water, and the nearest one of stone was at distant Gledsmuir, over some score of miles of weary moorland. It was clear that his cattle must bide on this farther bank, and he himself, when once he had seen them in safety, would set off for the nearest farm and pass the night. It seemed the craziest of matters, that he should be thus in peril and discomfort, with the lights of his house blinking not a quarter mile away.

Once more he tried to break the water-ring and once more he failed. The flood was still rising and the space of green which showed gray and black beneath a fitful moon was quickly lessening. Before, irritation had been his upper feeling, now terror succeeded. He could not swim a stroke, and if the field were covered he would drown like a cat in a bag. He lifted up his voice and roared with all the strength of his mighty lungs, 'Sammle,' 'Andra,' 'Jock,' 'come and help's,' till the place rang with echoes. Meantime with strained eyes he watched the rise of the cruel water, which crept, black and pitiless, over the shadowy gray.

He drove the beasts to a little knoll which stood somewhat above the meadow, and there they stood, cattle and man, in the fellowship of misfortune. They had been as wild as peat-reek, and had suffered none to approach them, but now with some instinct of peril they stood quietly by his side, turning great billowy foreheads to the surging waste. Upward and nearer came the current, rising with steady gurgling which told of great storms in his hills and roaring torrents in every gorge. Now the sound grew louder and seemed almost at his feet, now it ceased and nought was heard save the dull hum of the main stream pouring its choking floods to the sea. Suddenly his eyes wandered to the lights of his house and the wide slope beyond, and for a second he mused on some alien trifle. Then he was brought to himself with a pull as he looked and saw a line of black water not three feet from the farthest beast. His heart stood still, and with awe he reflected that in half-an-hour by this rate of rising he would be with his Maker.

For five minutes he waited, scarce daring to look around him, but dreading each instant to feel a cold wave lick his boot. Then he glanced timorously, and to his joy it was scarce an inch higher. It was stopping, and he might yet be safe. With renewed energy he cried out for aid, till the very cattle started at the sound and moved uneasily among themselves.

In a little there came an answering voice across the dark, 'Whae's in the laigh meedy?' and it was the voice of the herd of Clachlands, sounding hoarse through the driving of the stream.

'It's me,' went back the mournful response.

'And whae are ye?' came the sepulchral voice.

'Your ain maister, William Smail, forwandered among water and nowt beast.'

For some time there was no reply, since the shepherd was engaged in a severe mental struggle; with the readiness of his class he went straight to the heart of the peril, and mentally reviewed the ways and waters of the land. Then he calmly accepted the hopelessness of it all, and cried loudly through the void:

'There's nae way for't but juist to bide where

ye are. The water's stoppit, and gin mornin' we'll get ye aff. I'll send a laddie down to the Dow Pule to bring up a boat in a cairt. But that's a lang gait, and it'll be a sair job gettin' it up, and I misdoot it'll be daylight or he comes. But haud up your hert, and we'll get ye oot. Are the beasts a' richt ?

'A' richt, William ; but, 'od man ! their maister is cauld. Could ye no fling something ower !'

'No when there's twae hunner yairds o' deep water atween.'

'Then, William, ye maun licht a fire, a great muckle roarin' fire, juist fornenst me. It'll cheer me to see the licht o' t.'

The shepherd did as he was bid, and for many minutes the farmer could hear the noise of men heaping wood, in the pauses of wind and through the thicker murmur of the water. Then a glare shot up, and revealed the dusky forms of the four serving-men straining their eyes across the channel. The gleam lit up a yard of water by the other bank, but all midway was inky shadow. It was about eight o'clock, and the moon was just arisen. The air had coldened and a light chill wind rose from the river.

The farmer of Clachlands, standing among shivering and dripping oxen, himself wet to the skin and cold as a stone, with no wrapping save his plaid and no outlook save a black moving water and a gleam of fire—in such a position, the farmer of Clachlands collected his thoughts and mustered his resolution. His first consideration was the safety of his stock. The effort gave him comfort. His crops were in, and he could lose nothing there ; his sheep were far removed from scaith, and his cattle would survive the night with ease, if the water kept its level. With some satisfaction he reflected that the only care he need have in the matter was for his own bodily comfort in an autumn night. This was serious, yet not deadly, for the farmer was a man of many toils and cared little for the rigours of weather. But he would gladly have given the price of a beast for a bottle of whisky to comfort himself in this emergency.

He stood on a knuckle of green land some twenty feet long, with a crowd of cattle pressing around him and a little forest of horns showing faintly. There was warmth in these great shaggy hides if they had not been drenched and icy from long standing. His fingers were soon as numb as his feet, and it was in vain that he stamped on the plashy grass or wrapped his hands in a fold of plaid. There was no doubt in the matter. He was keenly uncomfortable, and the growing chill of night would not mend his condition.

Some ray of comfort was to be got from the sight of the crackling fire. There at least was homely warmth, and light, and ease. With gusto he conjured up all the delights of the past week, the roaring evenings in market ale-house and the fragrance of good drink and piping food. Necessity sharpened his fancy, and he could almost feel the flavour of tobacco. A sudden hope took him. He clapped hand to pocket and pulled forth pipe and shag. Hang it ! He had left his match-box on the chimney-top in his kitchen, and there was an end to his only chance of comfort.

So in all cold and damp he set himself to pass the night in the midst of that ceaseless swirl of

black moss water. Even as he looked at the dancing glimmer of fire, the moon broke forth silent and full, and lit the vale with misty glamour. The great hills, whence came the Gled, shone blue and high with fleecy trails of vapour drifting athwart them. He saw clearly the walls of his dwelling, the light shining from the window, the struggling fire on the bank, and the dark forms of men. Its transient flashes on the waves were scarce seen in the broad belt of moonshine which girdled the valley. And around him, before and behind, rolled the unending desert waters with that heavy resolute flow which one who knows the floods fears a thousandfold more than the boisterous stir of a torrent.

And so he stood till maybe one o'clock of the morning, cold to the bone, and awed by the eternal silence, which choked him, despite the myriad noises of the night. For there are few things more awful than the calm of nature in her madness—the stillness which follows a snow-slip or the monotony of a great flood. By this hour he was falling from his first high confidence. His knees stooped under him, and he was fain to lean upon the beasts at his side. His shoulders ached with the wet, and his eyes grew sore with the sight of yellow glare and remote distance.

From this point I shall tell his tale in his own words, as he has told it me, but stripped of its garnishing and detail. For it were vain to translate Lallan into orthodox speech, when the very salt of the night air clings to the Scots as it did to that queer tale.

'The mune had been lang out,' he said, 'and I had grown weary o' her blinkin'. I was as cauld as death and as wat as the sea, no to speak o' haein' the rheumatics in my back. The nowt were glowrin' and glunchin', rubbin' heid to heid, and whiles stampin' on my taes wi' their cloven hooves. But I was mortal glad o' the beasts' company, for I think I wad hae gane daft mysel in that muckle dowie water. Whiles I thoct it was risin', and then my hert stood still ; an whiles fa'in', and then it loupit wi' joy. But it keepit ge्यान near the bit, and aye as I heard it lip-lappin' I prayed the Lord to keep it whaur it was.

'About half-past yin in the mornin', as I saw by my watch, I got sleepy, and but for the nowt steerin', I might hae drappit aff. Syne I begood to watch the water, and it was rale interestin', for a' sort o' queer things were comin' down. I could see bits o' brigs and palin's wi'oot end dippin' in' the tide, and whiles swirlin' in sae near that I could hae grippit them. Then beasts began to come by, whiles upside down, whiles soomin' brawly, sheep and stirks frae the farms up the water. I got grund amusement for a wee while watchin' them, and notin' the marks on their necks.

'"That's Clachlands Mains," says I, "and that's Nether Fallo, and the Back o' the Muneraw. Gudesake, sic a spate it maun hae been up the muirs to work siccan a destruction !" I keepit coont o' the stock, and fegured to mysel what the farmer-bodies wad lose. The thoct that I wad keep a' my ain was some kind o' comfort.

'But about the hour o' twae the mune cloudit ower, and I saw nae mair than twenty feet afore me. I got awesome cauld, and a sort o' stound o' fricht took me, as I lookit into that black, unholy

water. The nowt shivered sair and drappit their heids, and the fire on the ither side seemed to gang out a' of a sudden, and leave the hale glen thick wi' nicht. I shivered mysel wi' something mair than the snell air, and there and then I wad hae gien the price o' fower stirks for my ain bed at hame.

'It was as quiet as a kirkyard, for suddenly the roar o' the water stoppit, and the stream lay still as a loch. Then I heard a queer lappin' as o' something floatin' down, and it sounded miles aff in that dreidfu' silence. I listened wi' een stertin', and aye it cam' nearer and nearer, wi' a sound like a dowe soomin' a burn. It was sae black, I could see nocht, but somewhere frae the edge o' a cloud, a thin ray o' licht drappit on the water, and there, soomin' down by me, I saw something that lookit like a man.

'My hert was burstin' wi' terror, but, thinks I, here's a droonin' body, and I maun try and save it. So I waded in as far as I daured, though my feet were sae cauld that they bowed aneath me.

'Ahint me I heard a splashin' and fechtin', and then I saw the nowt, fair wild wi' fricht, standin' in the water on the ither side o' the green bit, and lookin' wi' muckle feared een at something in the water afore me.

'Down the thing came, and aye I got cauldier as I looked. Then it was by my side, and I claught at it and pu'd it after me on to the land.

'I heard anither splash. The nowt gaed farther into the water, and stood shakin' like young birks in a storm.

'I got the thing upon the green bank and turned it ower. It was a drooned man' wi his hair lingin' back on his broo, and his mouth wide open. But first I saw his een, which glowered like scrapit lead out o' his clay-cauld face, and had in them a' the fear o' death and hell which follows after.

'The next moment I was up to my waist among the nowt, fechtin' in the water aside them, and snowkin' into their wet backs to hide mysel like a feared bairn.

'Maybe half an'oor I stood, and then my mind returned to me. I miscaed mysel for a fule and a coward. And my legs were sae numb, and my strength sae far gane, that I kened fine that I couldna lang thole to stand this way like a heron in the water.

'I lookit round, and then turned again wi' a stert, for there were thae leaden een o' that awfu' deid thing staring at me still.

'For anither quarter-hour I stood and shivered, and then my guid sense returned, and I tried again. I walkit backward, never lookin' round, through the water to the shore, whaur I thoicht the corp was lyin'. And a' the time I could hear my hert chokin' in my breist.

'My God, I fell ower it, and for one moment lay aside it, wi' my heid touchin' its deathly skin. Then wi' a skelloch like a daft man, I took the thing in my arms and flung it wi' a' my strength into the water. The swirl took it, and it dipped and swam like a fish till it gaed out o' sight.

'I sat down on the grass and grat like a bairn wi' fair horror and weakness. Yin by yin the nowt came back, and shouthered anither around

me, and the puir beasts brocht me yince mair to mysel. But I keepit my een on the grund, and thoicht o' hame and a' thing decent and kindly, for I daurna for my life look out to the black water in dreid o' what it micht bring.

'At the first licht, the herd and twae ither men cam' ower in a boat to tak me aff and bring fodder for the beasts. They fand me still sittin' wi' my heid atween my knees, and my face like a peeled wand. They lifted me intil the boat and rowed me ower, driftin' far down wi' the angry current. At the ither side the shepherd says to me in an awed voice :

"There's a fearfu' thing happened. The young laird o' Manorwater's drooned in the spate. He was ridin' back late and tried the ford o' the Cauldshaw foot. Ye ken his wild cantrips, but there's an end o' them noo. The horse cam' hame in the nicht wi' an empty saddle, and the Gled water rinnin' frae him in streams. The corp'll be far on to the sea by this time, and they'll never see't mair."

"I ken," I cried wi' a dry throat, "I ken ; I saw him floatin' by." And then I broke yince mair into a silly greetin', while the men watched me as if they thoicht I was out o' my mind ?

So much the farmer of Clachlands told me, but to the countryside he repeated merely the bare facts of weariness and discomfort. I have heard that he was accosted a week later by the minister of the place, a well-intentioned, phrasing man, who had strayed from his native city with its familiar air of tea and temperance to those stony uplands.

'And what thoughts had you, Mr Linklater, in that awful position? Had you no serious reflection upon your life?'

'Me,' said the farmer ; 'no me. I juist was thinkin' that it was dooms cauld, and that I wad hae gien a guid deal for a pipe o' tobaccy.' This in the racy, careless tone of one to whom such incidents were the merest child's-play.

'NEATH RADIANT SKIES.

TRANSFORMED are all the city streets to-day

On which the gracious sunbeams pour their gold ;
Soft airs prevail ; my window-box is gay

With buds that push bright heads above the mould.

Oh, somewhere in the country, far away,

I know the dim blue hyacinths unfold,

And daisies gleam, and perfumed breezes stray

Across the silver mere and grassy wold.

The cuckoo's voice is heard from wood and brake ;

Glad warblers twitter in the leafy sedge ;

The starry wind-flowers tremble as they make

A milky-way below the verdant hedge.

And while my little cage-bird sings and sings

His passionate song from dawn to twilight gray,

I almost hear the whirr of free brown wings

Against the greenness of the roadside spray.

The world is young ; the world will ne'er grow old—

Or do I look at things with clearer eyes

Because sweet hopes that drooped amidst the cold

Bloom out afresh beneath Spring's radiant skies?

E. MATHESON.

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MORE LIGHT ON THE '45.

WHAT Lord Rosebery has termed 'our last historical romance' still draws public interest. Immediately on the publication of Mr Andrew Lang's 'Pickle the Spy,' identifying this infamous personage with the great Highland chief Alastair Ruadh Macdonnell, the author was drawn into a brisk correspondence in the newspapers to still further establish and prove his point; there were numerous letters for and against, and the discussion is not yet ended. In like manner, references to the '45 in the autumn of 1895 led to a deluge of correspondence in the *Scotsman* from all quarters, many of the letters containing valuable items of information. No volumes of the Scottish History Society have been more popular than those dealing with the Rebellion—one of them the presentation volume from Lord Rosebery, containing the list of persons concerned in it. Another is that best of all quarries for information about the '45, Bishop Forbes's 'Lyon in Mourning,' once the property of Dr Robert Chambers, and used by him in 'Jacobite Memoirs;' issued complete, in three volumes, with index; this work has been so eagerly sought after that it is now worth five years' subscriptions to the Society. As supplementary to this, there is the 'Itinerary of Prince Charles Edward,' prepared by Mr W. B. Blaikie, in which the Prince's wanderings after Culloden may be traced by notes and maps. An earlier attempt at an Itinerary was that drawn up a few years ago by Mr R. E. Francillon, the novelist, and printed in a Highland newspaper. Among recent publications of interest are the letters of Mrs Grant of Laggan to Sir Henry Stuart of Allanton, which passed into the hands of Dr Robert Chambers, and are now published by the History Society, with an introduction by Mr J. R. N. Macphail. When the 'Journals and Papers' of John Murray of Broughton, the Prince's secretary, see the light, a further source of original information will be available. Two volumes issued by the New Spalding Club, entitled

'Historical Papers Relating to the Jacobite Period, 1699-1750,' edited by Colonel James Allardyce (1895-96), are also full of Rebellion material.

A perusal of any of these volumes sends one back to the 'History of the Rebellion of 1745,' by Dr Robert Chambers, which has continued to be an authority upon the subject from its first publication in 1827 till the present time. In the preface to the seventh edition of 1869 Dr Chambers safeguards himself against the idea that this was merely a Jacobite history. He had striven to be impartial; he expressly says that he disapproved of the whole attempt of 1745, thinking that its authors were under a grave mistake in preferring a superior right of *one* to the interests of the whole body of the people. And he adds that 'undoubtedly it was a crime to disturb with war, and to some extent with rapine, a nation enjoying internal peace under a settled government.' At the same time, full justice is done to all who moved across the page of this history, and to the heroic self-denial of those who followed Prince Charles Edward. Though many interesting items of information have recently emerged, there is nothing, save in the work first mentioned, to materially change our estimate of the main actors in the drama, as given by Dr Chambers.

Mr Lang's 'Pickle the Spy, or the Incognito of Prince Charles' (Longmans, 1897), is conspicuous for importance in recent Rebellion literature, and appeals strongly to the reader's 'passion of curiosity.' Strong circumstantial evidence is here produced to show that the chief of Glengarry, Alastair Ruadh Macdonnell, was the spy in question, and not as has been assumed, James Mohr MacGregor or Drummond, son of Rob Roy, who also figures so infamously during this period, and as such appears in R. L. Stevenson's 'Catriona.' Although Stevenson had not all these damning documents before him, according to Mr Lang he divined James Mohr with the assured certainty of genius. Pickle, who borrowed this name from Smollett's 'Peregrine Pickle,' quite belied the appearance of a spy and traitor. Young

Glengarry is described as 'tall, athletic, with a frank and pleasing face;' and he was also brave, for did he not move freely 'in France, England, and Scotland, well knowing that the *skian* was sharpened for his throat if he were detected.' Here is a list of some of his doings, for he seems to have been as consummate a scoundrel as Lord Lovat: 'He spoils the Elibank Plot, he reveals the hostile policy of Frederick the Great, he leads on the arrest of Archibald Cameron, he sows dissension, he traduces and betrays. He finally ravages his land, robs his tenants, dabbles (probably) in the French scheme of invasion (1759), offers further information, tries to sell a regiment of his clan, and dies unexposed in 1761.' Thanks to Mr Lang's burrowings amongst the Stuart Papers in the Royal Library, Windsor, and the Pelham Papers in the British Museum, the exposure is now complete. The identification is based on facts such as these: The writing of Pickle and young Glengarry is identical, and both misspell words in the same way; Pickle's letters speak of his father's death soon after old Glengarry died; Pickle asks that a letter should be addressed to him to the care of Macdonnell of Glengarry, and speaks of his clan and estates in terms that agree well with Glengarry's; and at least two Jacobite contemporaries said Glengarry was a rogue and traitor.

Before dealing with 'Pickle,' Mr Lang gives a comprehensive view of the history of the period, and a lively picture of Prince Charles, doing full justice to the romance of his early career, when his better nature was more in evidence, and follows the whole sordid story of his continental life, lifting the veil from some of his hitherto unknown movements between 1749 till his father's death in 1766. A correction is made as to the colour of his eyes; they were not *blue* but *brown*, and an eminent artist has pointed out the remarkable resemblance in his early profile to that of Queen Victoria in her youth. After 1749 he seems to have moved here and there in England, France, Germany, and Flanders. Part of this time he was in hiding in an alcove of the Paris convent of St Joseph, in the Rue St Dominique; 'unseen and unknown, he enjoyed every day the conversation of the most distinguished society, and heard much good and much evil spoken of himself.' Amongst the books he read were 'Tom Jones,' 'Joseph Andrews,' 'Athalie,' 'Clarissa,' and Wood and Dawkins' 'Ruins of Palmyra.' The Polish Princesse de Taluond figures in his later wanderings, a less worthy Flora Macdonald. There are other intrigues; Clementina Walkinshaw, whom he had first met near Bannockburn, joined him in Paris, travelled with him to Ghent, took his travelling name of Johnson, was treated and regarded as his wife, lived with him at Liège, and bore him a daughter in 1763. By this time Charles had more than blighted Jacobite hopes by his careless and cruel conduct and frequent dissipation, although his Scottish supporters were loyal to him till the last. Pickle was on his track by 1750 or 1751, and advised the English government as to his movements.

Scott is believed to have suspected the identity of Pickle, and the prototype of Fergus Mac-

Ivor in 'Waverley,' Alastair Macdonnell, who gave Scott his dog Maida, was a descendant of the chief now incriminated. The materials of this history were transmitted all too late by Mr Lang to R. L. Stevenson with the view of their being used in a romance which would have revolved round the buried treasure of Loch Arkaig, and which, as has been suggested, might have been called 'Treasure Loch, a Pendant to Treasure Island.' The value of this treasure is variously stated at 40,000 and 27,000 louis d'or, of which 19,000 were buried near the head of the loch, and 12,000 near the foot. According to Lord Elcho, Pickle and his father helped themselves to the extent of at least 1200 louis d'or. At Charles's request, the slender remains of this treasure were carried by Cluny to Paris in 1754. It seems to have sown dissension, setting 'clan against clan, kinsman against kinsman; had stained honourable names, and probably had helped to convert Glengarry into Pickle.' The Highlanders have not yet forgotten the treasure. 'You have caught one of the Prince's money-bags,' said a boatman to a fisherman on Loch Arkaig, who had hooked something heavy. It was, however, only a trout of 15 lbs. weight.

Alastair Ruadh Macdonnell was the son of the twelfth chief of Glengarry, whom he succeeded in 1754. His grandfather, Black Alister, did mighty deeds of prowess at Killiecrankie and Sheriffmuir. While holding a captain's commission in the Scots Brigade in France, young Alastair in 1745 was bearer of a letter from the Scottish Jacobites to Charles, bidding him not venture over to Britain without adequate French support. Young Glengarry was captured on the seas, imprisoned in the Tower for twenty-two months, and only released in 1747. His father was in Edinburgh prison about the same time, and was set at liberty later. Young Glengarry communicated from Paris with 'James III.' and the Cardinal Duke of York, asking 'suitable encouragement' and protesting loyalty. He was in London in 1749 and 1751, and, reduced to deplorable straits, having received nothing from James save a duplicate of his father's warrant to be a peer, decided that he must either starve or conform. So he turned spy like James Mohr MacGregor and Samuel Cameron. He had sold his sword and shoe-buckles in London in 1749, and also took money raised by a priest who pawned the watch of Mrs Murray of Broughton. He seems never to have been paid for his services to government, although he was continually dunning his masters for money. Henry Pelham, secretary of state, received much of his information.

Here is an example of a dunning letter from Pickle: 'If he [the Duke of Newcastle] thinks that my services, of which I have given convincing proofs, will answer to his advancing directly eight hundred pounds, which is the least that can clear the debts of my former Jants (jaunts), and fix me to the certain payment yearly of Five hundred at two several terms, he may command anything in my power upon all occasions. . . . I am so far from thinking this extravagant that I am persuaded it will save them as many thousands by discarding that swarm of videts (vedettes, minor spies) which never was in the past trusted. Pickle had various aliases, such as 'Jeanson,' 'Alexander Jackson,' and 'Roderick Random.'

He was in correspondence with the Hanoverian government between 1752 and 1760, and he died a year later. 'Yet in the government of the world,' adds Mr Lang, 'Pickle served England well. But for him there might have been another Highland rising, and more fire and bloodshed. But for him the Royal Family might have perished in a nocturnal brawl. Only one man, Archibald Cameron, died through Pickle's treasons.' About these treasons Mr Lang has woven an interesting narrative of over three hundred pages.

The government had serious work in settling the Highlands after the Rebellion. A letter in one of the New Spalding Club books, dated 1747, from one lieutenant-colonel (who seems to have been tired of the job) to another, says, 'The Gengarry and Lochaber men are playing the devil in the Highlands, for finding they are cutt off from their usual resources from the Low Country, they publicly declare they will borrow from those who never lost one single cow since the Rebellion. Lord grant, John, they would devour one another likewise.'

We have only space to refer to two other Rebellion books. In the New Spalding Club volume, the armed strength of the Highlands, just before the Rebellion, is quoted at twenty thousand men. In Lord Rosebery's published list of rebels, which is by no means complete, two thousand five hundred and ninety names are given. When Charles made his requisition upon Edinburgh, it was for six thousand pairs of shoes, one thousand tents, and two thousand targets. The *Caledonian Mercury* gives the number of Highlanders engaged at Prestonpans at one thousand four hundred and fifty-six. According to Lord George Murray, the army that invaded England was not above five thousand fighting men; with the force that remained in Scotland, the total was nine thousand. Lord Rosebery's list, though incomplete, proves that considerably less than half the number of adherents are Highland clan names, the bulk of the rebel force being from the districts of Dundee, Kincardine, Aberdeen, and the north-east of Scotland. The New Spalding Club volumes, already mentioned, throw much light on the rising in these districts.

In the letters of Mrs Grant of Laggan, printed in the twenty-sixth volume of the Scottish History Society, there is a life-like portrait of that old renegade, Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, who, along with Lochiel, was a prime mover in the Rebellion, and was beheaded in London in 1747. At Castle Dunie, where he kept open table, while professing to be generous to his guests he was mean to his own retainers, who had little or no wages, and had no food allowed to them but what they carried off on the plates. The consequence was that 'you durstn't quit your knife and fork a moment. Your plate was snatched if you looked another way.' After the death of the first Lady Lovat all restraint was thrown off; his daughters left him, as they could not endure his profane and licentious manners. When unwieldy and corpulent, he lost the use of his lower limbs, and was carried in a litter, with a great easy-chair borne after him. Few loved and none trusted him, yet he had subtlety enough to move the whole north to his purpose without laying himself open to detection. 'Remember,' he said fiercely once to

Prince Charles, when he expressed an inclination to give up his enterprise, 'your great ancestor, Robert Bruce, who lost eleven battles, and won Scotland by the twelfth.'

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER XIII.—THE INTERREGNUM.

LADY CAROLINE SELLWOOD was delighted to find Jack in the hall on making her descent next morning. He appeared lost, however, in a gloomy admiration of the ghostly guard in armour; the attitude and the expression were alike so foreign to him, that Lady Caroline halted on the stairs. But only for a moment; the next, Jack was overwhelmed by the soft tempest of her goodwill, and making prodigious efforts to return her smiles.

Suddenly she became severe.

'You're knocked up! You look as if you hadn't had a wink of sleep. Oh, I knew how it would be after all that racket; you dear, naughty Duke, you should have spared yourself more!'

'I was a fool,' admitted Jack. 'But—but I say, Lady Caroline, I do wish you wouldn't Duke me any more!'

'How sweet of you!' murmured Lady Caroline. 'You know you didn't last night!' he hastily reminded her.

'But that was an occasion.'

'Well! so is this!' exclaimed Jack, and his tone struck the other more than she showed.

'Where is Claude?' inquired Lady Caroline suddenly.

'On his way to Devenholme.'

'Devenholme!'

'And London, for the day. He had to catch the nine-forty.'

'So he has gone up to town! Odd that one never heard anything about it—I mean to say he could have made himself so useful to one. May I ask when he decided to go?'

Jack hesitated. He had been charged to keep a discreet tongue during Claude's absence; he had been supplied with a number of reasons and excuses ready-made; but perfect frankness was an instinctive need of this primitive soul, whose present thoughts stood out in easy print upon his face, even as he resolved to resist his instincts for once.

'He decided—this morning,' said Jack at last; and he took from his pocket a lengthy newspaper cutting attached to a pale green slip: 'This is an article on him and his books, that has just appeared in the *Parthenon*. What wouldn't I give to lay a hold of the brute who wrote it! I call it the sort of thing to answer with a hiding. It's one of a series headed "Our Minor Poets," which Claude says has been bad enough all through; but this article on him is the worst and most brutal of the lot. And—and—and old Claude took it to heart, of course; and—and he's run up to town for the day.'

'Because of a severe criticism! I should have thought he was used to them by now. Poor dear Claude; he can string a pretty rhyme, but he never was a poet. And you, Jack—since you insist—you never were an actor—until to-day!'

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Jack hung his head.

'You don't do it well enough, you dear fellow,' continued Lady Caroline caressingly. 'As if you could impose upon *me*! You must first come to me for lessons. Candidly now: what has taken him up to town in such a hurry? The same thing that—kept you awake all night?'

'Candidly, then,' said Jack, raising his haggard face doggedly, 'it was! And if you'll come out upon the terrace for five minutes, I'll tell you exactly what's wrong. You have a right to know; and I can trust *you* not to let it go any further for the moment. Even if I couldn't, I'd have to tell you straight! I hate keeping things up my sleeve; I can't do it; so let me make a clean breast of the whole shoot, Lady Caroline, and be done with it till Claude comes back.'

Lady Caroline took a discouraging view of the situation. The Red Marquis had been capable of anything: cousins though they were, she could not help telling Jack that her parents had forbidden her to dance with his father as a young girl. This might be painful hearing, but in such a crisis it was necessary to face the possibilities; and Lady Caroline, drawing a little away from her companion in order to see how he was facing them, forgot to take his arm any more as they sauntered in the sun. She undertook, however, to keep the matter to herself until Claude's return, at the mention of whose name she begged to look at the cutting from the *Parthenon*.

'A most repulsive article,' her ladyship informed Olivia after breakfast, but not until she had repeated to the girl the entire substance of the late conversation on the terrace. 'I never read anything more venomously ill-bred in my life; and so untrue! To say he is no poet—our Claude! But we who know him, thank goodness, we know better. It is the true poetry, not only in, but between every line, that distinguishes dear Claude from the mere stringers of pretty rhymes of whom the papers sicken one in these latter days. But where are you going, my love?'

'To get ready to go with—Jack.'

'To go where, pray?'

'Why, to Devenholme, as we arranged last night,' replied Olivia, with spirit. 'He said he would drive me over; and *you* said "how sweet of him," and beamed upon us both!'

Lady Caroline winced. 'You impertinent chit!' she cried viciously; 'you know as well as I do that what I have told you alters everything. Once and for all, Olivia, I forbid you to drive into Devenholme with—with—with—that common man!'

'Very well; the drive's off,' said the girl with swift decision; and she left her mother without another word.

She put on her habit and went straight to Jack.

'Do you mind if we *ride* into Devenholme instead of driving?'

'Mind! I should like it even better.'

'Then suppose we go to the stable-yard and see about our horses ourselves; and while we are there, we may as well stay and start by the back road, which will save at least a quarter of a mile.'

'My oath,' said Jack, without further provocation, 'you might have been dragged up in the bush!'

'I wish I had been!' exclaimed Olivia bitterly. He could not understand her tone. Nor did he ever know the meaning of the momentary fighting glitter in the brave brown eyes of the girl.

He rode as an inveterate bushman, entirely on the snaffle, with inelegantly short stirrups and a regrettable example of the back-block bend; nor did his well-broken back give him a chance of exhibiting any of the finer qualities of the rough-riding school. But indeed for the most part the couple sat at ease in their saddles, while the horses dawdled with loose reins and lazy necks in the cool shadows of the roadside trees. By mutual consent they had dispensed with an attendant groom. And Olivia had never been so kind to Jack as on this day when he was under so black a cloud, with so heavy a seal upon his lips.

For once she talked to him; as a rule she liked better to listen, with large eyes intent, and sympathetic lips apart—ever ready with the helpful word. But to-day she was wishful to entertain, to take him out of himself, to console without letting him suspect that she knew as much as he had told her mother. In a sense she knew more, for Lady Caroline had duly exaggerated his frank confession; and the girl's heart bled for her friend, on the brink of a disillusion without parallel in her knowledge. So she told him of her life in town and elsewhere; of the treadmill round of toilsome pleasure; of the penance of dressing and smiling with unflattering prettiness; of the hollow friendships and hollow loves of that garish life, and the unutterable staleness of the whole conventional routine. No doubt she overstated her case; and certainly her strictures were themselves conventional; but she was perfectly aware of both facts, and would have been exceedingly sorry to have had this conversation recorded against her. Olivia had a healthy horror of superiority, either of the moral or the intellectual order. But she was conducting a conversation with an obvious purpose; and it was only when he told her again, and more earnestly than before, how suited she was for the bush, that she proposed a canter, and turned him on to talk a mile nearer Devenholme.

'Now it's you to play,' she told him as they drew rein; 'and I want to hear some of your adventures. You've never told us any, yet you must have had heaps. So far I've only heard about the hut, the sheep, the homestead, and your old boss.'

'A white man!' interjected Jack. 'I wish you knew him.'

'So do I; but I can quite picture him; and just now I would much rather hear about some of your own adventures. So begin!'

Jack laughed.

'Really, Miss Sellwood, I never had one in my life!'

'Then really, my Lord Duke, I can't believe a word!'

Jack was laughing no more.

'Don't call me that!' he cried. 'For pity's sake, call me Jack!'

She had forgotten. Her heart smote her now, and the difficulty was to conceal her unsuspected sympathy; so she insisted on his calling her Olivia, to conclude the bargain; and the double

innovation made them both so self-conscious that she forgot her thirst for his adventures, while he brooded heavily upon his bitter-sweet advancement won too late.

So they came into Devenholme as the sun was shining fore and aft along the quaint old English streets. And in the town, where he was well enough known by this time, poor Jack was received with a cruel consideration that would have hurt him even more than it did had he dreamt how it affected his companion. The tender-hearted girl was inexpressibly grieved, and never more than when the jeweller mentioned a hundred guineas as the price of the ring to be changed; indeed, the situation in the jeweller's shop was perilously charged with hidden emotions. In his terribly equivocal position, Jack could not press upon Olivia things for which he might never be able to pay; neither could Olivia now refuse any present at all, nor yet lead him as low as she would have liked in the price, for fear of revealing her illicit knowledge. So at last they hit upon a curb-bracelet that fastened with a tiny padlock. It cost but forty-five shillings. And when he had locked it upon her right wrist, he pocketed the key without a remark, then paid ready money and left the shop in a throbbing agony of shame. The poor jeweller stood bowing them out with the hundred-guinea ring still in his hand.

THE CHIN HILLS AND THEIR INHABITANTS.

It was of certain rebellious Spanish tribes that a Greek writer of Roman history said that they seemed to exist for the sole purpose of maintaining the Roman army in fighting efficiency. The dictum is at once exaggerated and cynical, but it expresses a truth analogous to that which some people in our day express with less political insight and more uncharitableness, when they ascribe the frontier and tribal wars which are of such constant occurrence in modern Indian history to the insatiable cupidity of the British officer for medals and decorations. It is the old fallacy of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, and leaving it for what it is worth, we may be content to observe that one of the results—a beneficial result, too, in its way—of the wars which the factiousness of our warlike and barbarous neighbours in India forces upon us, is that of keeping our army up to its fighting pitch, and teaching it those lessons of military experience which in these piping times of peace are not otherwise to be obtained, and without which its mechanism would run the risk of rusting and proving useless should a more serious call at any time be made upon it.

But this is only one, and a comparatively insignificant, result. It is popularly believed in this country that British rule is on the whole ultimately a blessing to those who are subject to it; and though in some other countries the belief is regarded as only another manifestation of that spirit of self-satisfaction which is supposed to be characteristic of our nation, we may surely regard it as containing a large element of truth. And if we raise ourselves to a rather higher level, and

consider that the conquest of these savage peoples, besides securing for them and for us the blessings of peace, is also the means of bringing within our knowledge habits of life and thought so widely differing from our own; and if we are really 'instructed that true knowledge leads to love,' that where knowledge has begun, sympathy will follow, we may perhaps admit that after all, though evil may have been done, good may come of it.

Reflections such as these are suggested by the two handsome and well-illustrated volumes which have just issued from the government press at Rangoon, on the Chin Hills, and the history, manners, and customs of the inhabitants. Our relations with the Chins have been so very characteristic that it might be worth while to narrate them at length as an illustration of the methods of British policy. But, interesting as this theme is, more interesting is that which concerns our common humanity, and it is to this, as illustrated in this new gazetteer, to which we propose to turn, after a few words of preliminary explanation.

The Chin Lushai tract forms a parallelogram some 250 miles long, and 100 to 150 broad, lying, roughly, to the east of Assam, to the south of Manipur, to the west of Upper Burma, and to the north of Arakan. It is intersected from north to south by lofty and difficult mountain-chains ranging between 5000 and 10,000 feet high, thickly covered with vegetation. Primeval forest climbs the mountain sides, gradually becoming sub-tropical, till it gives way to dense pine woods, which in their turn yield to holly, rhododendron, and bamboo—the rhododendron flowering where no other tree can live. Ridge after ridge of this kind of country stretches as far as the eye can reach. It is the ideal home—to such base uses does nature come!—of dacoits, and such it has been from time immemorial. Exactly what its inhabitants are and how they got there it is difficult to say. According to an at least plausible theory, they are a part of the Dravidian, Chinese, and Tibetan stocks, who at one time, some 3000 years ago, lived together in or even to the west of Tibet. The first to move were the Dravidians, who spread over India, where they were eventually overrun by the Aryans. Next the Chinese moved eastwards, and lastly from time to time smaller hordes poured southwards into India and Burma. To one of these later immigrations a competent authority thinks that the Kukis of Manipur, the Lushais of Bengal and Assam, and the Chins belong.

It was the cession of Chittagong to the East India Company in 1760 that first brought the Lushais nominally into contact with the British power in India, but it was a hundred years before any attempt was made to bring them under control. Meanwhile, the annexation of Tipperah in 1761, and Arakan in 1826, the extension of the British sphere of influence to Manipur in the same year, the constitution of Assam as a non-regulation province in 1838, and in much more recent times the annexation of Burma in 1886, have gradually encircled the tract with British territory. Now it has been our consistent policy in India to leave frontier tribes whom, for political reasons, it was undesirable to reduce, and hill tribes whom, for geographical reasons, it was difficult to reduce, in possession of their independence; always provided

that they abstained from aggression and hostility. The policy is an old one ; it was practised by the Roman republic and Empire, and in our hands it has been justified by its results. But the Lushais and Chins were impossible neighbours. Year after year they descended towards all four points of the compass from their mountain fastnesses, burning the villages of the plains, and killing or carrying into captivity their inhabitants. In course of time these inhabitants had become, by the events already alluded to, British subjects, and the government could not allow this state of affairs to continue. Isolated punitive expeditions had failed of their effect, and nothing remained but to occupy the country permanently. After seven years' campaigning, which are still fresh in the public memory, this has been done. The Chin Hills have been proclaimed part of the Province of Burma, and are amenable to British Indian law ; and the work of pacification has proceeded so far that it is now possible to withdraw the troops from at least part of the district, and substitute for them (as in Burma itself) a military police.

A word has already been said as to the ethnology of the inhabitants of this newly proclaimed tract, and we have seen what their origin probably was. Taking them as they are now, we may say that though in origin racially identical—they are all Kukis—they have been split up, partly by village warfare, partly by the absence of a written language, into some six different tribes, which, together with certain independent southern villages, amount to a population of, roughly, 90,000. But in spite of almost infinite diversity of habits and customs, their general characteristics are said to be pretty much the same, and are summed up in none too favourable terms : 'The slow speech, the serious manner, the respect for birth and the knowledge of pedigrees, the duty of revenge, the taste for a treacherous method of warfare, the curse of drink, the virtue of hospitality, the clannish feeling, the vice of avarice, the filthy state of the body, mutual distrust, impatience under control, the want of power of combination and of continued effort, arrogance in victory, speedy discouragement and panic in defeat, are common traits throughout the hills.' Not a bright picture, certainly, but one which the detailed descriptions given by our officers seems fully to warrant. The dignified and self-assured Haka, the deceitful and treacherous Siyin, the shrewd and diplomatic Tashon, all seem to show our unregenerate nature at its worst, and it cannot even be said of them that they have the virtue of their defects. The idea of honour is altogether foreign to them. They think it natural and right to lie or deceive whenever they expect to gain thereby. An oath has little binding force for them, except, perhaps, their most solemn oath—that of eating earth. Though brave in war, here again they have no conception of honour, their one idea being to take as many lives as possible ; it is immaterial to them whose life they take or how they take it. Hence they prefer to kill their enemy from behind, and to murder helpless women and children ; thereby affording a curious illustration of the Benthamite doctrine that every man counts one and no more.

Their lives are divided between agriculture, hunting, fighting, and feasting. All their work

is done in the fields, artificially terraced on the steep hillside to prevent the surface soil and its contents being washed bodily away by the rains. They do not cultivate in common, but on the other hand, their fields are not separated by hedges ; and the Chin regards it as his right to shoot ruthlessly anybody else's cattle which he may chance to find straying on his own land. The objects of cultivation include millets of various kinds : rice, maize, peas, beans, sweet potatoes, yams, and other roots ; pumpkins, cucumbers, marrows, gurkins, onions, chillies, and other vegetables. On these the Chin relies chiefly for his sustenance ; for though he eats animal food greedily when he can get it (a dozen of them once got hold of the beef intended for fifty of our own troops, and devoured it all before they could be stopped), and is catholic in his tastes (he is said to eat everything except man and tiger, though in the south dog and goat are not fashionable), yet his hunting brings him in less than his labour.

But the labour is not unattended with danger, and in the more distant fields it is carried on under the protection of guards and sentries. For one of the favourite Chin tactics is to surprise a party of field workers, and it is said that nine out of every ten persons whose heads were carried off before our advent established a more settled state of things, lost their lives in or near their fields. For in this country every man's hand is against his neighbour. There is no justice, and no one to administer it. Might is right ; and though smaller offences, such as the murder of another man's slave, may be compensated by money, anything more serious becomes the cause of a blood feud, which may extend from village to village, if the offender seeks refuge in a neighbouring village, and his hosts decline to give him up. Once started, a blood feud is interminable, for its consequences extend to the future life ; and though the Chins have no hell for the wicked, they have one for him who dies by the hand of his enemy un-avenged. Indeed, many 'believe that the slain becomes the slave of the slayer in the next world ; and although his death may be avenged, nothing can alter the fact that he must remain a slave. Should the slayer himself be slain, then the first slain is the slave of the second slain, who in turn is the slave of the man who killed him !'

The heads of slain enemies are cut off, and stuck on poles *outside* the village, not inside, lest his spirit haunt the place. For the Chins are very superstitious. Though they do not believe in any Supreme Being, or if (as in the south) they do, it is in one incapable of anything but harm, yet they recognise and dread innumerable spirits. Twenty dwell in the house, twelve infest the fields, seven inhabit the jungle, eight control the rain, others live in particular trees, or woods, or hills, and all are authors of misfortune and calamity, and must be propitiated by sacrifice. It is to them that, like most savages, the Chin ascribes his illness. Wounds he understands and recovers from with astonishing rapidity and completeness. 'There is a man in the Kanhow country who was mauled by a bear four years ago ; his right eye and the whole of his cheek, most of the nose, and part of the jaw were carried away, and on one side of the head he resembles a skull, as all the

bone and teeth are exposed. This man carried loads for us during the last two years, and he dances at all the feasts.' But the unseen and insidious ravages of disease are attributed to spirits or the evil eye. Cholera is a demon whom they scare away with drawn swords; and a story is told of how a Chin came to one of our army doctors 'and complained that a rat had entered his stomach at the glance of a Yahow, and he went to the hospital quite prepared to die. He was, however, given an emetic, and reported in the morning that he had vomited up the rat in the night, and he then went home happy and cured.'

The most common illnesses among them are cholera and other bowel complaints, as is not unnatural considering the climate, their filthy habits, and their voraciousness. For if the Chins have one quality which may be accounted as a virtue, it is hospitality. No pretext for a feast is allowed to pass unused, whether it be a birth, a death, a marriage, a sacrifice, 'the payment of a debt, the making of an agreement, the slaughter of an enemy, the shooting of a deer;' and a feast 'implies a drinking bout, sometimes of many days' duration.' They drink a liquor named 'zu,' which is made from rice, millet, or Indian corn. It is described as 'a most refreshing drink after a hot march,' and is said to 'pull one together more quickly than any other stimulant in times of great fatigue.' Its effects do not appear to be very deleterious, for the Chin usually lives to a good age, though an habitual drunkard from childhood. 'Men, women, and even babies at their mothers' breasts all drink; and a state of intoxication is considered as creditable as it is pleasant. No event is complete without liquor, and nothing is an offence when committed under the influence of liquor. Not to ply a visitor with liquor is considered the height of discourtesy, and the warmth of a man's reception is gauged by the number of pots of liquor broached for him.' Consequently, as may be imagined, a feast is not a very edifying spectacle. On the arrival of the guests, pigs and oxen are slaughtered, and their flesh hacked off and boiled. During this process drinking begins. The guests sit in long rows, with their liquor pots between their knees, sucking hard at the tube, and talking very little. When the food is ready, all fall to, still silently, until, hunger satisfied, they revert to drink. Then their spirits begin to rise, gongs and horns are produced, and dancing and singing begin. 'As the night wears on, the revellers become hopelessly drunk: some sit moodily in corners, some lie with their faces in the dirt, and others quarrel and fight with fists.'

Altogether, the picture of these fellow-subjects of ours, as painted by our officers in the sober style of scientific inquiry, is not a pleasant one. We look in vain for anything that might be called a redeeming feature. But in public and private life, in the relation of father and son, mother and children, husband and wife, friend and friend, there is nothing to which they can appeal, who love to go back behind the corrupting influences of civilised life to the pure and unfallen 'life according to nature.' It is quite evident that here, at all events, civilisation, in the best sense of the word, has a great task before it. There is no reason to suppose that it will fail.

But human nature is not changed in a day, and it will be many a long day before the Chin becomes an ornament to a west-end drawing-room.

A ROGUE'S ERRAND.

By T. W. SPEIGHT.

I.

THE time was eleven o'clock on a sunny morning in May some thirty years ago, and the place, the Long Walk in the Regent's Park, London.

Two people, coming from opposite directions, both young and both fairly good-looking, met and shook hands. Leo, a big Newfoundland dog, who acted as the girl's escort, made a third at the meeting, and welcomed Eustace Dare with three or four effusive barks.

'You must not detain me more than a very few minutes,' said Miss Everson as her lover took one of her hands. 'Indeed, I would not have come out at all to-day had I not been anxious that you should know the news.'

As a rule Mary Everson was all smiles and blushes when she met Dare; to-day, however, her face was both pale and serious.

'What news?' asked Dare quickly.

'That of your uncle's illness.'

'Ah!' ejaculated the young man, the whole expression of his dark handsome face changing on the instant.

'It was on Saturday we met last,' resumed Mary. 'Well, in the course of Sunday Uncle James, who, as you are aware, has been ailing for a long time, became seriously worse. Yesterday morning his symptoms were so alarming that Dr Burrows obtained his sanction to calling in an eminent specialist. Of the result of the consultation I of course know nothing; but I am happy to say that to-day uncle is very much better—Dr Burrows himself admits as much. After breakfast this morning a lawyer, whom he had previously sent for, arrived, and after being closeted with him for upwards of an hour, took away his instructions for the drawing up of his will, which he is to bring at ten o'clock on Saturday morning, ready to be signed and witnessed.'

'He must indeed be ill,' said Dare, 'if he has consented to have his will drawn up. I was afraid he would go off one of these days without having made it, and leave everything at sixes and sevens.'

There was a little space of silence—they were now walking side by side—and then Dare said: 'I suppose, darling, that Uncle James has given you no hint as to how he intends to leave his property?'

'None whatever, Eustace; why should he?' asked Mary, turning a surprised face on her lover.

'Oh, I know of no reason why he should. Still, I thought it just possible that he might have let something drop in your hearing about his intentions.'

Mary shook her head. There was something in Eustace's remark which jarred on her feelings. 'I can go no farther to-day,' she said presently; and with that she turned and began to retrace her steps.

Dare turned with her. Usually he had plenty to say for himself, but to-day he was silent and preoccupied; neither was Mary in any mood for talking. At the Park gates they parted. Before letting her go he drew from her a promise that she would endeavour to meet him again on Saturday and bring him whatever news there might be to tell by that time. She had already an address to which she could telegraph to him in case of need.

Eustace Dare was the orphaned nephew of Mr James Armishaw, an Englishman, now nearly sixty years old, who had made a fortune in the United States, and still had his home there. Being unmarried and having no other relatives nearer than some half-cousins, Mr Armishaw had adopted his sister's son when the latter was twelve years of age, and had brought him up with the intention of making him his successor when he should see fit to retire from business.

In the course of a holiday visit to England, Mr Armishaw had sought out one of his half-cousins, a country doctor with a large family and a small income, and had been so pleased with the latter's eldest daughter that he had taken her back with him to the States. This was the Mary Everson whose acquaintance we have already made.

Mary and Eustace had not been long under the same roof before they fell in love with each other, and that not only without the sanction, but without the knowledge of Mr Armishaw. A little later had come a terrible explosion. The merchant, who for some time past had seen cause to find serious fault with Eustace, after a stormy interview with the young man, bade him quit his roof for ever. But, in order to save him from going wholly to the dogs, if he were minded to change his ways, his uncle after a few days so far relented as to settle on him an allowance equivalent to two hundred pounds a year of English money. The only explanation of the affair which Mr Armishaw vouchsafed Mary was, that his nephew had offended him beyond forgiveness, and that she was never to mention his name again.

But when Dare next saw Mary, which he contrived to do a few days later, and when he found that his uncle had told her no particulars concerning their quarrel, he did not fail to make it appear that he was a very ill-used person indeed, nor did he leave her till he had succeeded in enlisting her sympathies on his side. He told her that he loved her more devotedly than ever, and, girl-like, she believed him, and vowed that nothing should induce her to give him up.

At this time Mr Armishaw and Mary had been about a month in London. It had been thought that change of air and scene might benefit the merchant's health, and his intention had been to do the grand tour, as it used to be called, leisurely and by easy stages. For the present, however, all thought of resuming his journey was out of the question.

Dare had left the States for England about two months prior to his uncle's departure, the reason he alleged to Mary being that the chance of a first-rate situation had offered itself in London. Mary had written, informing him of their time of sailing, and she had not been

many hours in town before he arranged a meeting with her. Mr Armishaw, to whom, in the state of his health, the noise and bustle of a hotel were objectionable, had taken private apartments within a bowshot of Portland Place, from which to the Regent's Park, where Mary was in the habit of meeting Dare, was little more than a ten minutes' walk.

Mary Everson's life at this juncture had but one source of unhappiness, which arose from the fact that, as circumstances were just then, she was under the necessity of keeping her engagement a secret from Mr Armishaw. She loved and revered her 'uncle' (as he had taught her to call him), and would fain have had no secrets from him; but while he remained so embittered against his nephew, silence was her only policy. Dare had not failed to impress upon her that he had been treated both with harshness and injustice; and although it seemed difficult to believe that Mr Armishaw could so treat any one, still, being wholly ignorant of his reasons for discarding Eustace, she was not in a position to doubt, much less to dispute, her lover's positive assertions in the matter. All she could do was to wait patiently in the hope that before long Mr Armishaw would see cause to regret his treatment of Eustace, and take him back into favour. Then would come the time for their secret to be told.

Eustace Dare had been waiting in the Park on Saturday for upwards of an hour before his eyes were gladdened by the sight of Mary and Leo in the distance. After an affectionate greeting, Dare proceeded to cross-question Mary regarding the drawing up of his uncle's will.

'Mr Pearson, the lawyer, brought it at ten o'clock this morning,' said Mary, 'accompanied by one of his clerks. After it had been read over to uncle, he signed it, and it was then signed by the clerk and Mr Baxter, the landlord of the house where we are lodging, as witnesses. Scarcely was the lawyer gone before uncle sent for me, and at his request I enclosed it, together with a short note which he had written, in a double sheet of thick paper, which I sealed with green wax and stamped with uncle's signet-ring, which he took off for the purpose. Then I addressed the packet in my very best hand to Messrs Spurling and Spurling, his lawyers, at New York. Finally, I posted the packet a few minutes before coming to meet you.'

For some time they walked on in silence, Dare seeming so deeply immersed in his own thoughts that Mary refrained from speaking.

All along his hope had been that his uncle would die intestate, in which case he, Eustace Dare, would succeed to everything as heir-at-law. Consequently it was a terrible blow to him to find that his uncle had at length summoned up resolution to take a step which for years he had kept putting off from one time to another. That Mr Armishaw would wholly overlook him in his will he did not greatly fear, but that he would bequeath to him any large share of his property he had good reason to doubt; it might also be accepted as a fact that Mary would be handsomely provided for; and after that, in all probability, the bulk of

his property would be divided among various charities. If only he should have died without having made a will, what a different place the world would have been to Eustace Dare! But it was absurd to reason in that way. The will was an indubitable fact, and nothing now could cancel or abrogate its provisions, unless the testator of his own accord should choose to do so, of which there was no likelihood whatever.

Then suddenly a wild project—a madman's project, nothing less—leapt to life, full-grown, in his brain. Rousing himself from his abstraction, he said with a laugh:

'I am afraid, dear, that you find me but dull company this morning; but my excuse must be that just now I am a good deal worried and put about. After to-day you must not look to see me for some time to come, because, like my uncle's will, I too am bound for America, called there by important business which admits of no delay.'

Mary looked at him with troubled eyes.

'When do you start?' she asked in a voice which was not quite so steady as usual.

'To-night without fail. A few hours in New York will be all I shall need, so that I hope to be back in London within three weeks from now. It would be rather singular, would it not, if my uncle's will and I were to cross the Atlantic by the same steamer?'

When Mary returned she found Mr Armishaw labouring under some strange excitement.

'Several months,' he said, 'have now gone by since I told you that I never wished to hear the name of my unworthy nephew mentioned in my presence again. From that time to this he has been to me as one dead. To-day, however, the fact that he is still in existence has been recalled to my memory after a very unpleasant fashion. While you were out this letter reached me. I am wishful that you should read it.'

Mary took the letter, and crossing to the other window, read it with her face turned from her uncle. She saw with a thrill that it was in a woman's writing.

It was from a certain Emmeline Dare, who communicated the startling fact that Mr Eustace Dare was a married man, and that she was his wife. By profession a singer, she confessed that she had found her husband utterly unprincipled, selfish to the last degree, a born gambler, and an adept in every gentlemanly vice; and yet withal plausible, even fascinating, when it suited his purpose. Husband and wife had quarrelled and parted ere two months had gone by, but Dare had followed her to England, where he had subjected her to a series of petty annoyances, and had coerced her into making him an allowance out of her earnings.

It will readily be imagined with what varied emotions Mary read such a letter. The words seemed to burn themselves into her brain. When she had read to the last word, the hand that held the letter dropped by her side, and she stood staring out of the window with unseeing eyes till her uncle's voice recalled her to time and place.

'Well, and what do you think of Master Eustace now?' he asked. 'I know too much of him already not to feel sure that he is

quite capable of acting in the way he is here charged with. You must know that it was his forgery of my name to a bill for a considerable amount which brought matters to a climax with me. Twice already had I paid his gambling debts, while sundry other discreditable transactions on his part, of which he imagined I knew nothing, had not failed to reach my ears. But it was the forgery that crowned the edifice of his misdeeds. I met the bill, saying no word to any one; but from that day he and I have never met.' Then, after a momentary pause, he added: 'How I loved that boy no one but myself can ever know.'

'And this is the man—Heaven help me!—to whom I have given my heart and promised my hand,' said Mary to herself. 'And he—what must he have thought of the gift? How he must have laughed at my folly! How lightly he must hold me for allowing my heart to be so easily stolen away!' It had, indeed, needed but a handsome face and a persuasive tongue to fool her to the top of her bent. Oh, how she despised herself! And, to crown all, he was married.

Mr Armishaw's voice broke her reverie. 'By the way, dear, I suppose you duly posted my will this morning?'

'Yes, uncle; it never left my hands till I had given it into charge of the official at the post-office, who weighed and stamped it.'

In the course of the Sunday following, the *Montezuma*, one of a fleet of well-known liners running between Liverpool and New York, having left the former port on the preceding day, called as usual at Queenstown to take on board her final complement of passengers and mails before crossing the Atlantic. Among other passengers who joined the *Montezuma* at the Irish seaport was Eustace Dare. It was as a result of the knowledge acquired by him in the course of three previous voyages that he had conceived the audacious design which he was now bent on carrying into effect.

At the period to which our narrative refers it was the practice of the postal authorities to send a couple of officials—one of them being an officer of a superior grade and the other an ordinary sorter—in charge of the mails between Liverpool and New York and *vice versa*. It was the duty of these officials, in the course of the voyage, to sort the contents of the late mails which had been put on board at Queenstown, and make them up into different bags in accordance with their varying destinations on the great continent. The bulk of the mails, which were put on board at Liverpool, had already been sorted prior to leaving England. On the return voyage a similar process was gone through with that portion of the American mail which had been taken on board at the last moment. It will be enough to record that the process of sorting the late mails on board ship was discontinued in the year 1868, from which date other arrangements came into operation.

The sorting office was a special structure, placed well forward on the main deck, just large enough for the two officials to work comfortably in, and fitted up much after the style of the travelling post-offices, into which most of us

have taken a surreptitious peep in the course of our night journeyings. The chief official, who wore a dark blue uniform with a single gold stripe on each sleeve of his coat, ranked as a first-class passenger, and in all respects was treated as such.

The name of this official on the voyage with which we are concerned was Mr Jevons, a gentlemanly man verging towards middle age, who had been many years in the service, and had travelled in the same capacity on other lines besides that between England and the United States. He was a bachelor and somewhat of a lady's man, was fond of cards, as a pleasant means of dissipating the ennui which is too apt to make its presence felt on board ship, and could generally hold his own of an evening in the saloon when whist, euchre, cribbage, or what not was to the fore. On one point Mr Jevons was inflexible; he would never play for more than trifling stakes, just enough, as he put it, 'to give an interest to the game,' whatever it might be.

Eustace Dare seized the first opportunity that offered itself to enter into conversation with Mr Jevons, which was on the Sunday evening about three hours after they had left Queens-town, while that officer was taking a 'constitutional' on deck. There was rather a heavy swell on, and the majority of the passengers had found it convenient to remain below. Mr Jevons, who was of a sociable disposition, made no difficulty about responding to Dare's advances, neither did he refuse one of the very superior cigars, with a stock of which that young gentleman had seen fit to furnish himself before leaving town. From that time forward Dare stuck close to Mr Jevons and cultivated his society assiduously.

On the fourth day out Dare said to the mail officer as they got up from luncheon together: 'By the way, what sort of a den is that in which, day after day, you and your man shut yourselves up from the sight of everybody? I confess that I have a great curiosity to see it.'

'Come with me, then, and you shall have a peep at it. More than that I can't promise you. It is against the rules to allow any one not a P. O. official to set foot inside it.'

Dare followed Mr Jevons, his heart beating considerably faster than ordinary.

The officer unlocked the door with the patent key which was never let out of the possession of himself or his subordinate, and having flung it wide, he paused with Dare on the threshold while the latter took a survey of the interior. On the floor were scattered a number of bags with broken seals, some empty, others only partially so. Two-thirds of the space was occupied by the sorting desk, backed by an arrangement of pigeon-holes of various sizes, many of which were already crammed with mail matter almost to repletion. Dare's quick eyes, roaming from one pigeon-hole to another, presently spied protruding from one of them a longish and somewhat bulky packet, having an outer covering of blue-white paper, which some instinct seemed to tell him was his uncle's coveted will. The pigeon-hole contained other letters and papers, and from where he was

standing he could neither make out the address, nor tell whether it bore on its back the seal of green wax stamped with his uncle's signet ring of which Mary Everson had made mention. Still, he felt all but sure that there in very deed was the identical document, in order to secure which he was prepared to run almost any risk and go to almost any extreme.

For a few moments all his faculties seemed concentrated in his eyes, and when Mr Jevons informed him that the day after to-morrow the sorting would be finished, he had to bring himself back with an effort.

As Dare turned away, after thanking Mr Jevons, his face changed. 'So,' he said, drawing a long breath, 'in the course of the day after to-morrow the re-sorted bags will be made up and sealed. My attempt must take place either to-night or to-morrow; after that it will be too late. To-night, then, let it be, in case the first attempt should prove a failure.'

THE LITERARY ASSOCIATIONS OF THE TEMPLE.

Few things can lend a charm like that of association with great men and great events; and no associations appeal more strongly than those with the great names in our literature—the names of those who have charmed us in our hours of ease, or cast a cloak of comfort round us in our troublous times of unrest. They surround us with a fascination that cannot be analysed, and with simple reverence we stand uncovered in the presence of aught that suggests the great man's name.

Though Hampstead Heath is, and always has been, the abode of many distinguished literary men, 'The Temple,' lying between Fleet Street and the Embankment, is almost as closely associated with literature, teeming as it does with the memories of many great names. Brilliantly they cluster round it, the memory of one coming so fast on the association with another that at length they seem like stars lost in each other's brightness. It has little magnificence of architecture, and though most noted for its connection with the English law, much of its interest and fame is entwined with that of English literature. The buildings, dismal and murky-looking with London fog and smoke, the worn flagstones, the rickety staircases, the sun-dials, the fountain, and the old-fashioned pumps have all a share in the glory of our literature.

It was about 1327 or 1328 that the Temple buildings came into the hands of a body of lawyers from Thavies' Inn, Holborn. They took it on a lease from the Knights Hospitallers of St John at a rent of £10 a year. That century gave two great names to our literature, Gower and Chaucer, and both of these the Temple claims as members. Had one no other information, one would have concluded from the reading of Chaucer's description of the 'sergeant of lawe ware and wise' and of the 'gentil manciple of the Temple' in the prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*, as well as from the knowledge of law displayed throughout his writings, that he must have been intimately connected

with the legal profession. Chaucer, it is inferred (though Chaucer's biographers, alas! do not accept the inference), was a member of the Inner Temple, for Buckley, a writer of the reign of Elizabeth, mentions a record of that society in which 'Geffrey Chaucer was fined 2s. for beating a Franciscan friar in Fleet Street.' Gower, too, was a student of law, and in one place refers to having met Chaucer in the Temple. Thus early commences the connection of the two societies of the Temple with literature.

From the time of Chaucer till the reign of Elizabeth, English literature can present us with few great names, and the records of the Temple are equally barren. Thomas Sackville, Earl of Dorset, the lofty, melancholy, and moral author of the *Mirroure of Magistrates*, became a member about the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. He was the founder of the Dorset family, and, as Walpole called him, 'the patriarch of a race of genius and wit.' He was an intimate friend of Spenser, who has dedicated a sonnet to him, and he is further connected with literature by the fact that the *Scholemaster* of Roger Ascham was written for his children.

The Temple, too, has its share in the Elizabethan dramatists, as it can number among its members Massinger, Ford, and Beaumont. Of the personal life of Massinger we know very little; but from old editions of his works we learn that some of his plays were composed for the society of the Inner Temple, of which he was a member, and that they were performed in the hall of that Inn. His tragedy, *The Picture*, was dedicated 'To my honoured and select friends of the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple.' His contemporary Ford, the great painter of unhappy love, was also a member of the Inner Temple. He does not appear to have depended on his literary work for his livelihood, but rather to have followed diligently the employment of the law. Beaumont, who collaborated with Fletcher in those works which vie with Shakespeare's in tragic and romantic eloquence, belonged to the Middle Temple. Both were of high social status, Beaumont being the son of a famous judge and Fletcher the son of a bishop. These three are the contribution of the Temple to an age of great dramatists.

Though Evelyn the diarist was a member of the Middle Temple, and lived at 5 Essex Court, the other great diarist of those days, Samuel Pepys, cannot be claimed. Both, however, mention the Temple in their writings. In 1642, Evelyn tells us, he was chosen Comptroller of the Christmas revels at the Middle. He was then twenty-two years of age. Many years later he writes: 'Went to see the revels at the Middle Temple, an old but riotous custom, which hath relation neither to virtue nor to policy.' Pepys tells us of an amusing incident which happened in 1669. 'My lord mayor being invited this day to dinner at the Reader's Feast at the Temple, and endeavouring to carry his sword up, the students did pull it down, and force him to go and stay all day in a private councillor's chambers, until the reader himself could get the young gentlemen to dinner. And then my lord mayor did retreat out of the Temple with his sword up.

This did make a great heat among the students, and my lord mayor did send to the king, and also I hear that the drums did beat for the train bands; but all is over, only I hear the students have resolved to try the charter of the city.'

'Honest Tom Southerne,' the first to hold up to execration the slave-trade, and the author of *The Fatal Marriage*, was entered as a student of the Middle Temple in 1678. He soon deserted the law for the profession of arms, and is said to have been present at the battle of Sedgemoor. Congreve, the comrade of Swift at Kilkenny school, became a member of the Middle Temple when he came to London, but, like Southerne and Rowe, soon forsook law for literature, and became the darling of society. Rowe, the author of *Jane Shore* and *The Fair Penitent*, entered the Temple in 1691. The study of law, however, had little attraction for one of such good presence and lively manners; and on his father's death in 1692 he betook himself to society and literature, and enriched our vocabulary with his 'gallant, gay Lothario.' Fielding the novelist had some experience of the world before he joined the Middle Temple in 1737, aged thirty, at a time when he seemed to have to 'choose between being a hackney coachman and the career of a hackney writer.' The record of his entry is as follows: '1 Nov^{bris}. 1737.—Henricus Fielding de East Stour in Com. Dorset, Ar., filius et hæres apparens Brig. Gen^{lis}: Edmundi Fielding admissus est in Societatem Medii Templi Lond. specialiter et obligatur cum,' &c. He is said to have studied vigorously, and often to have left a tavern late at night to abstract the abstruse works of authors in civil law. While a student he gave his aid in editing a periodical called *The Champion*, and it is probably of this that Thackeray was thinking when he writes of Fielding, 'with inked ruffles and a wet towel round his head, dashing off articles at midnight, while the printer's boy is asleep in the passage.' After his call he regularly attended the Wiltshire sessions; but he did not succeed, though he appears to have made many friends among the lawyers, as the list of subscribers to his *Miscellanies* shows. Perhaps it was this connection with law which gave him some claim in 1748 to be appointed a Justice of the Peace for Westminster.

Cowper the poet entered the Inner Temple as a student in 1748, and was called in 1754. He was much averse to his profession, and longed for a country life and repose. His necessities, however, compelled him to follow his calling to some extent, and subsequently he was made a Commissioner of Bankrupts and a clerk to the Committee of the House of Lords. Like Beaumont, he was of legal descent, his grandfather having been Spencer Cowper, a Justice of the Common Pleas.

Of the famous literary Irishmen of the last century, Burke, Sheridan, Moore, and Goldsmith were members of the Middle Temple. Burke joined in 1750, but his health was weak, and he seems to have spent much of his time travelling about in company. He was never called to the bar, for his distaste for the study of the law led to his rejection of the profession for which he had been destined by his parents. It is said that this angered his father so much

that he withdrew his allowance of £100 a year. When in London, Burke always resided about the Temple, and in 1756 we hear of him lodging above a bookseller's shop at Temple Bar. Sheridan and Moore, who had been together at the school of Mr Samuel Whyte, in Dublin, were both members of the Middle Temple, but forsook law for literature. It was the success of the *Odes of Anacreon* that led Moore to take this step. One cannot but remark how often success in literature has turned aside the ambition for legal honours. It would seem that the young aspirant for fame takes hold of that which first holds out a hand to him. Moore's nominal connection with the legal profession may have stood him in good stead, for he was made Registrar of the Court of Admiralty in Bermuda. 'Poor Goldy,' the kind-hearted and sympathetic poet and essayist, first entered the walls of the Middle Temple in 1763. Here he lived, here he worked, here he died, and, by the north side of the church, a plain slab marks his tomb. He first lived for five years in Garden Court, and there he commenced his *Deserted Village*. Forster, his biographer, writes: 'Nature, who smiled upon him in his cradle, in this garret in Garden Court had not deserted him. Her school was open to him even here, and in the crowd and glare of streets but a step divided him from her cool and calm refreshment. Amongst his happiest hours were those passed at his window, looking into the Temple Gardens . . . as there he sat, with the noisy life of Fleet Street shut out, and made country music for himself out of the noise of the old Temple rookery.' He removed to No. 2 Brick Court in 1768, and there he lived until 1774, the year of his death. 'I have been,' says Thackeray, 'many a time in the chambers in the Temple that were his, and passed up the staircase which Johnson, Burke, and Reynolds strove to see their friend, their poet, their kind Goldsmith; the staircase on which the poor women sat weeping when they heard that the greatest and most generous of men was dead behind the black oak door.'

To the same coterie of the residents of the Temple belonged Johnson and Boswell. They lived in the buildings of the Inner Temple. 'Dr Johnson's Buildings' still bear testimony of the great lexicographer's residence, where many distinguished persons visited him in his untidy rooms. We can imagine how, many a time, with his greasy old wig all awry on his head, and his stockings and slippers as slovenly as usual, he would drag himself, with Boswell by his side, across Hare Court to visit Goldsmith. And as easily can we imagine all three wending their way in the dark evenings to the 'Mitre Tavern,' the famous resort of that jovial company. Boswell lived in Farrer's Buildings, at the entrance to Hare Court, and it is said to be here that he first met Johnson, who found in him a patient listener to his mighty sentences.

No one is more imbued with the spirit and culture of the Temple than Charles Lamb, the charming essayist. He was born one year after Goldsmith's death, in Crown Office Row, in the Inner Temple, facing the gardens, and lived at a later date in Inner Temple Lane. Whatever he may owe to the Temple he has amply

repaid in his essay, 'The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple.' In it he has unfolded the influence on his mind of the surroundings of his childhood in a way that suggests 'how fit it was that he should have been planted there, a rare growth, nourished by the rich soil of the past; in the one place in all London where everyday life yet keeps something like a saving grace of antiquity.' And he tells us that no verses were repeated to himself more frequently or with a more kindly emotion than those of Spenser, beginning:

Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilom wont the Templar knights to bide.

He has given a place in English literature to the sun-dials, 'with their moral inscriptions, seeming coevals with that time which they measured, and to take their revelations of its flight immediately from heaven, holding correspondence with the fountain of light. What a dead thing is a clock, with its ponderous embowlements of lead and brass, compared with the simple, altar-like structure and silent heart-language of the old dial!' The Temple fountain, too, is one of his sweetest memories, 'which I have often made to rise and fall, how many times to the astoundment of the young urchins, my contemporaries, who were almost tempted to hail the wondrous work as magic.'

Two great names of more modern times will always be associated with the Temple from their having immortalised it in their works, namely, Thackeray and Dickens. Thackeray began to study law in the Temple about 1831, when he was twenty years of age, for we find that a note of his dated Hare Court, Temple, Dec. 16, 1831, records that he has just finished 'a long-winded declaration about a mortgage.' There is no other mention of his connection with law, though one of his letters in 1833 is dated from 5 Essex Court, Temple. It is strange that this address was that of Evelyn the diarist. It is not, however, Hare Court or Essex Court around which Thackeray has thrown a perennial interest, but 'No. 6 Lamb's Court,' the residence of Pen and Mr George Warrington. It was here Fanny Bolton nursed Pen in his illness, and here afterwards came Pen's mother, Laura, and the major. And it was under the lamp in the Court that Fanny, after she was turned out, used to stand weeping in the evening, listening to the family making merry upstairs with her hero. It was in the room below, too, that Miss Laura amused herself with Mr Percy Sibrigh's books, wig, and scent bottles. Dickens has immortalised the Temple fountain, of which he writes so delightfully in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and round which shall for ever cling the romance of Ruth Pinch and John Westlock. Many a time Ruth went through the square where the fountain is, to meet her brother, and 'it was a good thing for that same paved yard to have that little figure flitting through it, passing like a smile from the grimy old houses, and the old love letters shut up in iron boxes in the neighbouring offices might have stirred and fluttered with a moment's recollection of their ancient tenderness as she went lightly by.' It was here she met John Westlock, and nothing can excel the passage

in which Dickens, with an exquisite touch, tells of their meeting. 'Merrily the tiny fountain played, and merrily the dimples sparkled on its sunny face, as John hurried after her: softly the whispering water broke and fell, and roughly the dimples twinkled as he stole upon her footsteps.' When they met on another occasion their steps turned towards the fountain, and when it was reached they stopped and glanced down Garden Court, 'because Garden Court ends in the gardens, and the gardens end in the river, and that glimpse is very fresh and bright on a summer day.' Shakespeare has made the gardens famous by his conception (in *Henry VI., Part I.*) that the quarrel which led to the Wars of the Roses took place there, the disputants Somerset, Suffolk, Warwick, and Plantagenet having adjourned thither, as 'Within the Temple hall we were too loud.' In these gardens, too, Sir Roger and Mr Spectator used to walk, discoursing on the beauties in hoops and patches, that hovered about on the green lawn. The hall of the Middle Temple has an unique fame, in that it is the only building now existing in which a play of Shakespeare was acted during the author's lifetime. We learn from the diary of a member of that society that on February 2, 1601, 'at our feast we had a play called "Twelve Night, or What you will," much like the "Commedy of Erroures" or the "Menechmi" of Plautus.' This performance was at the Readers' Feast at Candlemas, and there on 10th February last the Benchers and their friends held a 'revel,' when *Twelfth Night* was again acted, in the way it is believed to have been done in 1601.

To enter into a survey of those living writers who are members of the Temple would be a difficult task, so numerous are they. Let it suffice to say that many of those who are now among the successful in literature are claimed as members, and have felt, like Tom Pinch, the strange and mystic charm that hangs around the chambers in the Temple. The very atmosphere suggests a thought of learning and peaceful meditation, and one feels, in passing day by day where once the great ones trod, that their memories seem to assume, as Coleridge says, 'the accustomed garb of daily life, a more distinct humanity, that leaves our admiration unimpaired,' and that there is thrown around this ancient home of the Templar Knights a fame as fresh and charming as the memory of those with whom it has been associated.

A SLIGHT MISTAKE.

By ARCHIBALD EYRE.

'MARRIAGE is the saving of a young man,' said my Aunt Tabitha sententially.

I assented, for I find it pays to give a ready acquiescence to abstract propositions.

'You must marry,' continued my aunt.

I hesitated, for to assent to the concrete is more dangerous.

'I am still very young,' I said meekly.

My aunt turned to my mother. 'Whom shall Alfred marry?'

My mother shook her head.

'Somebody nice,' she volunteered.

'What do you say to Letitia Brownlow?' asked my aunt.

'I would prefer to say nothing to Letitia Brownlow,' I interposed hastily.

'Or Amelia Stafford?'

'Is she not rather'—my mother waved one hand; 'and Alfred is so slim.'

'I think she has a very fine figure,' responded my aunt. 'Or there is Gertrude Williams; she will have a fortune if she outlives her sisters.'

'There are only five of them,' I said hopefully.

'Or Mabel Gordon?'

'She has taken a course of cooking lessons,' observed my mother.

'No, none of these?' I cried decisively.

My aunt looked offended.

'Very well, then, choose for yourself,' she said tartly.

'Perhaps that would help,' I remarked thoughtfully.

'You will choose somebody nice, won't you, Alfred?' said my mother.

'With money,' observed my aunt.

'Well connected,' emphasised my mother.

'Not too young,' added my aunt.

'And religious,' begged my mother.

'There is no objection to her being good-looking?' I asked, a trifle timidly.

'No, I think not,' said my aunt, 'provided she fully understands beauty is but skin-deep.'

'I will tell her,' I murmured.

'Well,' said my aunt impatiently, after a short pause, 'whom do you suggest?'

I thought for a moment.

'What do you say to Winifred Fraser?'

'That minx!' cried my aunt.

'Oh Alfred!' echoed my mother.

'Why not?' I asked.

'Such a dreadful family!' said my mother.

'So fast!' interjected my aunt.

'But have you ever noticed the sun on her hair?' I asked innocently.

My aunt drew herself up.

'We have not noticed the sun on her hair,' she said with much dignity—'nor do we wish to observe the sun on her hair.'

I was justly annoyed. 'I really think it must be Winifred Fraser,' I said. 'She is very fond of me and'—

'How can you be so cruel to me!' cried my mother. 'Have you noticed how gray my hair is getting? You will not have me long.' She drew out her handkerchief.

'You will come to a bad end,' said my aunt. 'I always thought you were depraved. If you marry that painted hussy, you must not expect my countenance.'

'Under the circumstances, I will not marry Winifred Fraser,' I said with great magnanimity, for I did not particularly want my aunt's countenance.

My aunt sniffed. 'You had better not.'

'I merely joked,' I said soothingly, remembering she had not made her will.

'Indeed!'

'The truth is'—I dropped my voice—'I am in love with some one else.'

'And you never told me!' said my mother reproachfully.

'The girl I love is not free.'

'Married!' cried my aunt.

'Not married—but engaged.'
 'Who is it?' asked my mother gently.
 I was silent for a moment, and then I sighed.
 'It is Constance Burleigh.'
 'It would have been a most suitable match,' murmured my mother.
 'Very suitable,' repeated my aunt.
 There was a momentary silence, broken by my aunt.
 'I did not know Constance was engaged.'
 'It is a secret; you must not repeat what I have told you.'
 'I don't like these secret engagements,' said my aunt brusquely. 'Who told you?'
 'She told me herself.'
 'Who is the man?'
 'I do not think I should repeat his name.'
 'I hope Constance is not throwing herself away.'
 I shook my head doubtfully.
 'You know the man?'
 I nodded.
 'Is he quite—quite'—
 Again I shook my head doubtfully.
 'What have you heard?' my aunt asked eagerly.
 'I don't think I ought to repeat these things.'
 'You can surely trust your mother,' murmured my mother.
 'And my discretion,' said my aunt.
 'Well,' I said, 'I have been told he is cruel to his mother.'
 'Really!' cried the two ladies in a breath.
 'His mother told me so herself.'
 'How sad!' said my mother.
 'And what else?' asked my aunt.
 'Another relation of his told me he was deprived.'
 'Poor, poor Constance!' whispered my mother.
 'And would probably end badly.'
 'I expect he drinks,' said my aunt grimly.
 'Does Constance know this?' asked my mother.
 'I don't think so.'
 'You did not tell her?'
 'Of course not.'
 'I consider it is your duty to.'
 'I really cannot.'
 'Then I will,' said my aunt resolutely.
 'What I have said has been in confidence.'
 'I do not care.'
 'I beg you not to do so.'
 'It is my duty. I am too fond of Constance to allow her to throw herself away on this worthless man.'
 I shrugged my shoulders. 'Do as you please, but don't mention my name. By the way, Constance said she would probably call this afternoon.'
 At that moment the bell rang.
 'That may be her,' said my aunt, flying to the window. 'It is.'
 I got up slowly and sauntered into the conservatory which adjoins the drawing-room. From behind a friendly palm I could see without being seen. I saw my aunt look towards my mother.
 'If we open her eyes,' I heard her whisper, 'it may pave the way for Alfred.'
 My mother said nothing, but I saw the same hope shine from her eyes.
 The door opened and the servant announced

Constance. She came forward with a little eager rush; then, stopped short, embarrassed by the want of reciprocity.
 'We are glad to see you,' said my mother and kissed her.
 My aunt came forward. 'We were just speaking of you,' she said solemnly. 'Sit down.'
 Constance looked a little crushed. 'I thought Alfred would have told you,' she murmured.
 'We have heard'—began my aunt.
 'Hush,' interposed my mother. 'Come nearer me, Constance. Won't you take off your hat?'
 Constance came and sat by her side. 'I was anxious to come and tell you that—that—'
 'If you are alluding to your engagement,' said my aunt somewhat severely, 'we have already heard of it.'
 'You have heard!' cried Constance.
 'With the deepest sorrow.'
 Constance drew herself up.
 'You do not approve?' she asked proudly.
 'We love you too much,' said my mother gently.
 Constance looked bewildered.
 'You are too good for the wretch,' cried my aunt.
 'What! Oh what do you mean?' exclaimed Constance.
 'If you marry this man,' continued my aunt vigorously, 'you will regret it.'
 My mother took her hand. 'My sister should not tell you this so suddenly.'
 'It is my duty to speak, and I will,' cried my aunt. 'I will not let Constance unite herself to this man with her eyes closed.'
 'What have you against him?' demanded Constance, a red spot beginning to burn in each cheek.
 'He drinks,' answered my aunt almost triumphantly.
 Constance sank back in the cushions.
 'I don't believe it,' she said faintly.
 'He ill-treats his mother—beats her, I believe,' continued my aunt.
 'This cannot be true,' cried Constance. 'Mrs Granville, tell me!'
 My mother nodded sadly.
 'Alas! I cannot deny it.'
 Constance rose. 'This is awful!' she said, holding on to the back of the sofa. 'I could never have believed it.' She put her hand to her forehead. 'It is like a bad dream.'
 'My poor, dear Constance,' murmured my mother, rising and putting her arms round her.
 My aunt brought up her artillery. 'He is thoroughly depraved, and will come to a bad end. His relations are at one on this point.'
 Constance buried her face in my mother's bosom. 'Oh dear, oh dear, and I love him so,' she sobbed.
 In the adjoining room I was becoming uncomfortable.
 'We thought it right to tell you,' said my aunt, moved by her tears, 'though Alfred begged and implored us not to.'
 'I could never, never have believed it,' sobbed Constance. 'Poor, poor Mrs Granville!'
 My mother soothed her.
 'How difficult you must have felt it to tell me this,' exclaimed Constance, drying her tears. 'It was so good of you. I will not give him another

thought. To treat his mother so cruelly! Oh, Mrs Granville, I am so sorry for you!

'It is I who am sorry for you,' said my mother doubtfully.

'And no one would have dreamed it. We always thought you were so fond of him, and spoiled him so utterly. And all the time you were hiding your sorrow. How noble of you!'

My mother looked at Aunt Tabitha, who returned her stare.

'Who ever is it?' said Aunt Tabitha whispering. 'Find out.'

'Where did you meet him, dearest!' whispered my mother.

'Meet him? Why here of course,' said Constance with opening eyes.

'Yes, yes, of course,' said my mother, mystified.

'I thought you would be so pleased, and I hurried across to tell you.'

'Can Alfred have made a mistake?' muttered my aunt hoarsely.

The two elder ladies stood still in the utmost embarrassment.

'I shall never be happy again,' said Constance mournfully.

'Don't say that,' implored my mother. 'Perhaps there is a mistake.'

'How can there be a mistake?' asked Constance, raising her head.

'There can be no mistake,' said my aunt hastily.

'How could he be cruel to you?' cried Constance, kissing my mother.

'Cruel to me?' cried my mother.

'You said he was cruel to you.'

'Of whom are you speaking?' cried both ladies.

'Of Alfred, of course.'

The two elder ladies sat down suddenly.

'You are not engaged to Alfred?' they gasped simultaneously.

'To whom else?' said Constance in amazement.

'There is some misunderstanding,' I observed smoothly, coming in at the moment.

The three fell upon me together.

It took at least an hour to explain. Yet I had said nothing which was not strictly true.

'You will not allow these practical jokes when you are married, will you, Conny?' said my mother fondly.

'I will not,' replied Constance, tightening her lips.

'Marriage is the saving of a young man,' repeated my aunt grimly.

BABOON-HUNTING ON AN AFRICAN FARM.

Stock farmers in South Africa have to contend with many natural hindrances and difficulties, and not the least among these must be reckoned the constant depredations of wild Carnivora. The most destructive animals still to be found within the civilised limits of Cape Colony and the Orange Free State, are the panther (known locally as the tiger) the jackal, the lynx, the wild cat, and the baboon. In order to cope with these depredators, trapping and poisoning are largely resorted to, and farmers' 'poisoning clubs,' subsidised by government, are a regular institution in many districts of the Colony.

While poison is most effectively used against burrowing creatures of the jackal kind, baboons are best dealt with in open warfare with the rifle, and large baboon-hunting parties are often got up among neighbouring farmers. A short description of one of these baboon hunts may be of interest to readers in the mother-country, and will give them an idea of some of the out-door experiences of their colonial cousins in farming districts between Cape Town and the Vaal River. The special character of baboon-hunting is derived from the fact that baboons are generally found in large troops, numbering up to eighty or a hundred or more. In some of the karroo farms of the Sneeuwberg and Compass Berg ranges in the Midland districts of the Colony, for instance, the rocky krantzes and kopjes covered with bush and boulder are often infested by such troops. So long as they are left undisturbed in their strongholds, so long must the farmer be content to see the tale of his losses in stock grow bigger every day. Single-handed not much can be done, for baboons are difficult to approach, and if surprised at close quarters they have a good idea of defending themselves with large stones. It is one of the farmer's most tantalising experiences to stand at the door of his homestead, gun in hand, and see the baboons just out of range on the rocky sky-line a few hundred yards away—now springing on all fours like a large dog, now squatting on their haunches like a Bushman—and to know that the cunning beasts are just watching till his back is turned that they may seize their opportunity to swoop down and raid his flocks. Their predatory methods, too, are revoltingly cruel, and 'baboon-handled' stock can always be recognised at a glance. They will attack cattle, tearing the udders away with their long powerful hands, and sheep and goats are often found by the herdsmen with their hindquarters stripped of the flesh right to the bone, and left to die in slow torture.

Moreover, the baboon is no respecter of persons, and the costly imported 'long-wool' or the priceless Angora may fall a victim, no less than the common Cape 'hamel' or 'capater' which would only fetch half-a-sovereign or so at the market in Cradock or Graaff-Reinet.

These facts are mentioned to show that the farmer has little cause to love baboons, and that it is to the interest of those who suffer from the raids of these merciless freebooters to combine in force, so as to kill off as many of the common enemy at each *coup de main* as possible.

And now to come to the plan of campaign. An open assault by day is of little use, for the almost human intelligence of the baboon is proverbial, and it is well known that the principles of 'sentry-go' are put into practice in each troop. At the first sign of an enemy's approach the deep barking *Yā-hu! Yā-hu!* of the simian sentinel sounds a warning note to the rest, and immediately the whole troop is seen making off stealthily behind the boulders to the back of the krantz or springing along the spur of the ridge to the heights beyond.

So, to ensure a successful hunt, it is needful to begin circumventing the enemy the day before. The Kaffir herdsmen are sent out towards sunset and instructed to form a wide circle round

the baboons' feeding ground—the prickly pear scrub tracts of the veldt are their special haunts. Quietly narrowing the circle, they gradually head the scattered feeders towards one particular krantz which has been agreed upon, and, by the time it is dark, the baboons, suspecting nothing, are safely ensconced for the night in the rocky clefts of their Majuba Hill.

Meanwhile, from the neighbouring farms in the district, one after another rides to the appointed rendezvous at the homestead.

A good 'meet' will muster a dozen or fifteen guns. After suitable refreshment, and perhaps two or three hours' sleep till after midnight, the party of sportsmen make their way by moonlight to the scene of action.

Each man has his position assigned to him. Presently the hill is surrounded, the guns being a hundred yards or so apart. A couple of the party are told off to the post of honour (and danger) at the top of the krantz. This is to cut off the baboon's retreat when the guns begin to shoot from below. The troop is thus hemmed in between two fires. These dispositions having been made as silently as possible, there is nothing more to be done except take out a pipe to keep awake, lying out in the warm clear night to watch for the first streaks of the early South African dawn.

Between three and four in the morning a falling stone or a cracking mimosa branch sets the watchers on the alert. By-and-by in the gray light the first baboon is sighted cautiously coming out to take his morning observations. *Crack!* goes a rifle. The baboon leaps up in the air, and a blood-curdling scream, startlingly human, proclaims that one of the assassins of the sheep-kraal has met his righteous fate. Taken by surprise, the whole troop rushes out to escape, and for the next few minutes things are lively for all the guns, as the baboons clamber up towards the top of the krantz only to find an equally warm reception awaiting them there.

Unless some unguarded point affords a loophole of escape—oversights do occur in the best regulated hunts—the number left *hors de combat* upon the field of battle will be very often as many as thirty or forty, or even more. As the Red Indians' victory was not complete until the scalps of their fallen foes adorned their waist-belts, so the last thing the baboon hunter does is to secure the tails of the slain.

For the tail of a baboon the government offers a reward of three shillings (there is a fixed tariff for the predatory animals according to their size and destructiveness) as an encouragement to the farmers and some compensation for their loss of time. Between six and seven the sportsmen are back at the homestead for an early breakfast before they ride off again to their respective farms. The return from a baboon hunt is generally awaited by the feminine portion of the farmer's household with some degree of suspense and uneasiness. For in the uncertain light of the early morning it is not difficult to mistake a man for a baboon, and the men on the top of the krantz sometimes find the bullets whizzing around at rather too close quarters to be pleasant.

Wild shooting, or an incautious change of

position by one of the party in the excitement of the moment in order to get a better aim, have been known to lead to narrow escapes; and casualties are on record which have resulted in a tragic termination of the hunt. As a commentary upon this element of risk in baboon-hunting, there is a story current of a man who was once asked in an hotel bar: 'Well, how did the hunt go off?' 'Fine,' was the laconic reply; 'forty baboons and two men!' To an adventurous disposition, it is just the dash of danger which adds the zest to the sport, and certainly this kind of campaigning against brute foes is of no small importance in the development of the colonial character. By such experiences as these, young colonists are taught from their childhood to handle a gun, to keep their heads cool in a warm corner, and generally to cultivate that steady self-reliance which has so often been put to the test in graver conflicts through the troubled history of the white man's struggle for South Africa. For in a small way the same kind of qualities are called into play in surrounding the baboon troops in their krantzes as our men had to exhibit not long ago in their operations against the Matabele among their rocks and caves in the Matoppe Hills.

HER GARDEN.

THE silent shadow slowly creeps

Across the dial's moss-grown face.

What strange new ghost of stillness keeps

Its haunt in this familiar place?

These are the paths her footsteps trod,

Her laugh made gay the summer air;

The kingcup in the marshy sod

Was not more yellow than her hair.

The sunlight falls on shrub and tree,

The soft wind stirs the unmown grass,

The waiting watch-dog looks to see

One face that never more will pass.

The fruit upon the orchard bough

Drops idly down, with none to heed;

The gravel-ways, deserted now,

Are green with many a springing weed.

The flowers she tended with such care

In lush luxuriance straggle wild,

A tangled mass of blossom there

Where once in rainbow ranks they smiled.

A flock of white doves wheels away

In sudden flight, with whirl of wings;

Upon a slender lilac spray

A little robin lights and sings.

But lonely—lonely—is the place,

That shadow strikes a chillness there,

And all the pleasant garden-space,

To me seems empty, blank, and bare.

MARY MACLEOD.

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A ROYAL ROAD TO HEALTH.

BY A MEDICAL MAN.

THE average human biped, and the fire at which he warms himself, have one or two things in common. In the first place, they are both burning. Secondly, they both make ashes. Thirdly, they both need fresh air, or neither could go on burning long.

Everybody knows that the body is constantly undergoing a process of pulling down and building up. Every bit of work we do literally and absolutely means so much of our bodies reduced to ashes, and every meal we eat is fresh fuel to the fire. Our bodies are living furnaces, slow furnaces, very slow, but furnaces in deed and in truth. But, for the burning to go on, be it never so gradual, fresh air is necessary. Fresh air means an unlimited supply of oxygen.

How do we get it? How the parlour fire gets it is a simple matter enough. In through the window, or under the bottom of the door, under the bottom bar, up through the coals, and there you are! We have a more complicated apparatus. That the fresh air may get into our tissues, it must first get into our blood. It gets into our blood through our lungs. We draw a breath, at that moment the blood in our lungs seizes on the incoming air, and hurries off with it triumphantly to the waiting tissues. The waiting tissues are the whole body. And that they are waiting is shown by the fact that we do draw a breath; for, generally speaking, we only breathe when our bodies are in need of the air we take in. To an average healthy person, sitting quietly in a chair, this happens from sixteen to twenty times a minute. Every time he breathes, a new supply of fresh air is rapidly carried down the ever-branching arteries to the minutest and most remote capillary twig in his body—from the crown of his head to the tips of his toes. Each drop of blood has its life-giving load to carry, but when it reaches its destination, its labours are not ended. It arrives laden. It may not go back empty. But the return load is different. It brings back ashes.

Now, a great part of the body's ashes is carbonic acid gas, just as the load for the outward journey was oxygen gas. And, just as the oxygen gas was taken in by the lungs, so the carbonic acid gas is taken to the lungs to be shot forth as rubbish. This is what happens when we breathe out, or expire, before taking in the next breath.

All this in a healthy person goes on sweetly, and with the most beautiful regularity; but many people are not quite healthy. And of those who are not quite healthy, by far the larger number have nothing very serious the matter with them. They are not steamers whose propellers are broken; their engines are a little rusty, that is all. Their circulation is sluggish, they suffer from cold feet, their digestion is easily upset, they are nervous and languid, they are a host of other things, but all their organs are intact. Not one single piece of their machinery has had a bit chipped out. Their sluggish circulation is the key to the whole situation: not only is oxygen carried to their tissues in insufficient quantities, but—and this is of equal importance—their ashes are not properly and efficiently dealt with. The ashes are not promptly and completely carried away. They linger in the byways and alleys of the body. It is this accumulation of used-up and poisonous products that is the cause of about three-quarters of the chronic complaints with which doctors have to deal. Gout, rheumatism, congestion of the liver and other organs, indigestion, and many other distressing complaints, are really, in a very large proportion of cases, the result of a faulty circulation.

What is the remedy? Exercise. Drugs may bring temporary relief, but exercise will effect a cure. Exercise means more fresh air breathed in, a quicker circulation, and, therefore, more fresh air carried to the tissues; and, most important of all, it means good riddance of the useless ashes. Judicious exercise sweeps the whole body clean.

There are two kinds of exercise, namely, active and passive. Active exercise is common to ordinary out-door sports and pastimes; passive exercise is practised on those too weak to make an effort

for themselves. Movement is a feature common to both, but whereas in active exercise the movement is in proportion to the effort made and the work done, in passive exercise the effort is practically *nil*, the work done by the patient is nothing.

Now, whether the exercise be active or passive, the element that sets the blood going is movement, not effort. The quickening of the circulation is, roughly speaking, in proportion to the amount of muscular movement, not in proportion to the work done.

Passive exercise is well illustrated by massage, or the Ling and Zander treatment. The patient makes no effort, his limbs are moved for him. Moving the muscles causes their blood-vessels to dilate, and a free flow of blood through them ensues. Used-up material is carried away, and the patient is very much benefited. The features of passive exercise are movement, increased circulation, absence of effort.

In active exercise, however, a different state of things obtains. In all our sports and pastimes, cycling excepted, the amount of movement obtained is in direct proportion to the work done. For this reason, that considerable effort must be made to ensure a considerable amount of movement, our ordinary sports are ill adapted for weakly people. What a weakly person wants is an amount of movement that shall send his blood circulating at the cost of a comparatively small effort.

An ideal exercise for a weakling must not be too violent, nor fatiguing, nor monotonous. On the other hand, it must not be too absorbing, for it is a curious physiological law that a strong concentration of the will is as exhausting as strong muscular effort.

Cycling fulfils these conditions.

Cycling is not too monotonous, and, while calling for attention on the part of the rider, it makes no exhausting demand upon his mental energies. But it is in the wonderful range of exercise that it offers to its devotees that cycling stands pre-eminent. Mount a rider on a pneumatic cycle on a level road, and the amount of force necessary to carry him fifty yards is infinitesimal compared to that expended in walking the same distance. But, although the effort expended is so small, his legs are subjected to a rapidity and extent of movement as great as in running. That little force is used is shown by his breathing. His wind is not affected.

We have said before that a man breathes when he wants air. He wants fresh air when the carbonic acid gas in his blood has reached a certain percentage. Now, in accordance with the law that every effort reduces some minute portion of the body to ashes, it follows that the greater the effort the more the carbonic acid gas. But, since the more the ashes the oftener a man wants to breathe, it is practically the same thing to say that effort may be measured by the rapidity and depth of the breathing.

A cyclist going at a moderate pace does not breathe rapidly. But, on the other hand, his legs are in rapid motion. Let us remember it is movement not effort that quickens circulation. The rider is not breathing rapidly, but the blood is circulating freely through his whole body. His lungs get an abundant supply; and, his

breathing being unembarrassed, the air he inspires is generously absorbed.

In other words, he manufactures little carbonic acid gas, but he takes in a large supply of oxygen. The blood in his arterial system becomes a vivid scarlet. Muscular movement draws the blood to the extremities, in the absence of strain the arteries relax, and the heart instead of having to pump against a stagnant circulation has only to 'follow on.'

This, then, is the condition of a rider cycling in moderation: he is developing his muscles by exercise—not the leg muscles only, but also those of his loins, back, abdomen, chest and arms—his heart is beating easily, his lungs are doing their work to perfection, and there is circulating in his blood more life-giving oxygen than his body well knows what to do with.

What a different physiological picture this is from that of a brain-worker in the midst of his sedentary toil! For him things are going very differently. His circulation is languid, the bellows of his lungs are not blowing properly, he is producing ashes faster than they are carried away. His demand for oxygen is in excess of the supply.

Now let us take an extreme case. Suppose that we have to do with a man so feeble that all he can manage is a little walking exercise; and suppose, moreover, that he has not learned to cycle. A tricycle is the thing for him. Mount him on a light pneumatic of low gear, and let him do a very little at a time on level roads. Let him never tire himself, and never get out of breath. Day by day he will improve. His circulation will improve, his digestion will improve, his appetite will improve, he will gain flesh and put on muscle. Then as he gains in strength he can go farther, and—here comes in the unique value of the cycle—he can gradually increase his pace till the exercise from being an almost passive one (movement without effort) may become an active exercise of the most exacting order.

The greater the pace, the more hilly the roads, in other words the greater the effort, the more nearly does cycling approach other forms of sport in its demands upon the system. And as such it is capable of calling for all the stamina of a typically healthy man. But with a low gear on level roads, cycling tempers itself to the invalid, and without fatiguing expenditure of effort allows a freedom of movement and a consequent oxygenation of the blood unknown in any other form of sport.

There is just one other point. Cycling tends to become more or less automatic after it has been practised for some time. It is a physiological law that any action performed automatically gives rise to comparatively little fatigue. The heart works automatically, it never rests, and it is never tired—till death. And so, of course in a minor degree, with cycling. This and this alone explains the otherwise marvellous feats of champion riders. Who ever heard of any one in any other single sport going on for seventy hours at a stretch. Yet this has been done on a cycle.

To sum up then. Cycling is a very special exercise. It differs from others in the following particulars:

(1) It is graduable. Under the easiest possible conditions it is almost altogether passive exercise;

and from this by increasing the speed, riding up hill, going against the wind, using a higher gear, it may become the most vigorous active exercise.

(2) In proportion as it is passive it flushes the tissues with bright oxygenated health-giving blood. Other exercises, in consequence of the effort necessary, are apt in weakly people, if pursued at all vigorously, to lead to an accumulation of effete material.

(3) In consequence of the little effort cycling calls for in proportion to the extensive movement it allows, there is a remarkable absence of subsequent fatigue. The result is a delightful exhilaration after riding.

The moral of all this is: Let all people living sedentary lives cycle daily whenever the weather will permit. If you have heart disease, or any other grave ailment, consult your doctor about it. If your malady is merely general wretchedness, biliousness, headache, weariness, debility, nervousness and the rest—then cycle, cycle, and go on cycling.

If you are too weak to learn to cycle—and learning often calls for considerable effort on account of the clumsy movements of the novice—begin on a tricycle. Begin quietly, do a little every day, increase the length of your spin as you feel able, never fatigue yourself, and in a few months you will feel like a different being, and bless the day when you resolved to follow the advice here given.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER XIV.—JACK AND HIS MASTER.

It was necessary to bait the horses; it was equally essential for the pair themselves to have something to eat. So they rode under the olden arch of the oak-lined Falcon, and it was 'your Grace' at every step, with ironic iteration very hard for either of them to bear without a word to the other. They dismounted therefore with the less delay; and Olivia had turned her back upon the coffee-room window, and on a bald, elderly, well-dressed man, whose cool fixed stare made the girl extremely angry, when Jack at her side gave a shout of delight.

'So help me never! *it's the boss himself!*'

Olivia turned, and there was the objectionable old fellow in the window smiling and waving to her enchanted companion. And this was the man of whom she had heard so often! She did not stop to consider how he came to be here; the two men were already at explanations, but Olivia was not listening. She was thinking of the bearded, jovial, hearty squatter of her imagination; and she was glancing askance at the massive chin and forehead, and the white moustache cropped close over the bad mouth of the real man.

'Mr Dalrymple—my old boss—Miss Sellwood!' shouted Jack, introducing them with a wealth of pantomime. 'We're coming up to lunch with you, sir; that is, you're to lunch with me; it's my shout!'

And poor Olivia found herself swept off her feet, as it were, into the presence of a man whom all her instincts had pronounced odious at sight.

But the higher court of the girl's intellect reversed this judgment on the appeal of her trained perceptions. The elderly squatter was not, after all, a man to be summed up at a glance or in a word: his undoubted assurance was tempered and redeemed by so many graces of manner and address as to upset entirely the girl's preconceptions of his class. At table he treated her with a princely courtesy, imperceptibly including her in a conversation which poor Jack would have conducted very differently if left to himself. After the first few minutes, indeed, Olivia could see but two faults in the squatter; the first was the fierce light his charming manners reflected upon those of Jack; and the second was a mouth which made the girl regret the austere cut of his moustache whenever she looked at Mr Dalrymple.

'So you left before shearing, sir!' cried Jack, who was grossly eager for all station news. 'I wonder you did that. They must be in the thick of it now!'

'They were to begin on the fifth of this month. The shearing, Miss Sellwood, is the one divine, far-off event towards which the whole sheep-station moves,' added Mr Dalrymple, with a glibness worthy of Claude Lafont.

'And don't you forget the lamb-marking,' chimed in Jack. 'I hope it was a good lambing this year, sir?'

'Seventy-one per cent,' replied Dalrymple. 'I'm afraid that's Greek to you, Miss Sellwood—and perhaps better so.'

'You see I'm as keen as ever on the old blocks!' cried Jack. It was a superfluous boast.

'So I do see; and I must say, Jack, you surprise me. Do you notice how he "sirs" me, Miss Sellwood? I was on my way to pay my homage to the Duke of St Osmund's, not to receive it from Happy Jack of Carara!'

'Do you often come over to England, Mr Dalrymple?' asked Olivia quickly. For the girl had seen the spasm in Jack's face; and she knew how the anæsthetic of this happy encounter had exhaled with the squatter's last speech.

'No, indeed!' was the reply. 'I haven't been home for more years than I care to count; and the chances are that I shouldn't be here now but for our friend the Duke. He unsettled me. You see, Miss Sellwood, how jealous are the hearts of men! I had no inheritance to come home to; but I had my native land, and here I am.'

'And you have friends in Devenholme?'

'I have one friend; I wish that I dared say two,' replied the squatter, looking from Jack to Olivia in his most engaging manner. 'No; to tell you frankly, I was on a little inquisitive pilgrimage to Maske Towers. I did not wait for an invitation, for I knew that I should bring my own welcome with me.'

'Of course, of course; come out to-morrow,' exclaimed Jack nervously. 'I'll send in for you, and you must stay as long as ever you can. If only I'd driven in, as I meant to, we'd have taken you back with us; yet on the whole to-morrow will be best; you must give us time to do you well, you know, Mr Dalrymple. It'll be a proud

day for me ! I little expected to live to entertain my own boss !'

Indeed, his pride was genuine enough, and truly characteristic of the man ; but at the back of it there was a great uneasiness which did not escape the clear, light eye of Dalrymple. Not that the squatter betrayed his prescience by word or sign ; on the contrary, he drank Jack's health in the champagne provided by him, and included Olivia's name in a very graceful speech. But Jack drank nothing at all ; and having reduced his roll to a heap of crumbs, he was now employed in converting the crumbs into a pile of pellets.

Olivia pitied his condition ; that tremulous brown hand, with the great bush freckles still showing at the gnarled finger-roots, touched her inexpressibly as it lay fidgeting on the white table-cloth. She strained every nerve to keep the squatter engaged and unobservant ; and she found herself fluctuating, in a rather irritating manner, between her first instinctive antipathy and her later liking for the man. He was extremely nice to her. He had also an obvious kindness for poor Jack. And she apprehended a personal magnetism, a unique individuality, quite powerful enough to account for Jack's devotion. She felt the influence herself. Yet there was a something—she could not say what.

The way in which her last vague prejudice was removed, however, made a deep impression upon Olivia. It also gave her a startling glimpse of her own feelings. And it was occasioned by a casual remark of Dalrymple's, in elucidation of his prompt expedition to the district, to the effect that the Duke of St Osmund's had once saved his life.

'Your life !' cried Olivia, while Jack ceased meddling with his bread.

'To be sure. Is it possible he has never told you the story ?'

'Not a word of it ! And only this morning, as we rode in, I asked him if he had never had any adventures !'

Her face was a flushed reproach.

'I'd forgotten that one,' said Jack sheepishly. 'I really had. It's so long ago ; and it wasn't much when you come'—

'Not much !' echoed Dalrymple. 'I should be very sorry to find myself in such a tight place again ! It's some thirteen years ago, Miss Sellwood. I was thinking of taking up some cattle country in the unfenced part of Queensland. I had gone up to have a look at the place, and the blacks attacked us while I was there. We were three strong in an iron store ; the owner, a stray shearer, and myself. The shearer had his horse hung up outside ; he could have got away quite easily in the beginning ; but our horses were all turned out, and he wouldn't leave us. So we dragged his horse inside, and we set to work to defend the store.'

'I know that shearer !' cried Olivia proudly. 'Yet he hangs his head ! Oh, go on, Mr Dalrymple, go on !'

'From daybreak to sundown,' continued the squatter, 'we defended ourselves with a Winchester, a double-barrelled shot-gun, and an old muzzle-loading rifle. The blacks came on by the score, but they couldn't get in, and they couldn't set fire to the corrugated iron. It was riddled

like a sieve, and each of us three had a hole in him too ; but there was a wall of dead blacks up against the iron outside, and they were as good as sand-bags. We should have beaten the fellows off before midnight if our powder had held out. It didn't ; so I assure you we shook hands, and were going to blow up the place with a twenty gallon tin of petroleum, that was luckily inside, when our friend the shearer came out with an idea. His horse had a ball in its body, and was screaming like a woman ; so that it was no use. I recollect we put it out of its pain with our last charge. But there was long dry grass all round up to within some fifteen yards of the store ; and after dark the shearer ran out three times with a bucket of petroleum, and once with a box of matches. The last time but one the blacks saw him. They had surrounded the place at a pretty respectful radius, and they were having what we call a spell ; but they saw him the last time but one. And when he went out again and struck his matches they had something to aim at. Well, his first match went out, and there was a sheaf of spears sticking in the sand and three new holes through the house. We waited ; not another thing could we see. We didn't know whether he was dead or alive, and we heard the blacks starting to rush us. But we also heard the scratch of a second match ; in another instant the thing flared up like a circular lamp—and us in the middle of the burner ! The country was burnt black for miles and miles all round, and we ourselves had a hot time of it, Miss Sellwood ; but here are two of us, at all events, to tell the tale.'

Olivia bowed to him ; she could not speak. Then for a little she turned her wet eyes, wet with enthusiasm, upon the awkward hero of the tale. And without more words the party broke up.

Jack was still remonstrating with Dalrymple when the girl rejoined them outside.

'Come, now !' she said. 'Was it true, or wasn't it ?'

'More or less,' admitted Jack.

'Was it true about the horse and the petroleum and the spears ?'

He confessed that it was, but discredited his memory as a clumsy qualification. Olivia turned away from him, and said no more until she was in her saddle ; then, while Jack was mounting, she rode up to the squatter.

'I am truly grateful to you, Mr Dalrymple,' she said ; 'and all the others will be as grateful as I am, and will look forward to your visit. But for you, we might all have gone on being entertained by a hero unawares. You must tell us more. Meanwhile, I for one can thank you most heartily !'

And she leant over and frankly pressed his hand ; but said very little all the long ride home. Jack assured her, however, that he had never thought of his wound for years, although he must have a bullet in him somewhere to that day ; and he told her that the fight with the blacks had been the beginning of his connection with his old boss, whose service he had never left until the end. And for miles he spoke of no one else ; he was so grateful to Olivia for liking his friend ; and he had so many stories of Dalrymple to set as well as he could against that one of himself. So

the ride drew to an end in the golden afternoon, with never a tender word between the pair, though his heart was as full as hers; but she could not speak; and the great seal lay yet upon his lips.

(To be continued.)

BELGIUM FOR THE BRITISHER.

By M. CORBET-SEYMOUR, Bruges.

IN AND AROUND BRUGES.

GLOBE-TROTTERING has become the most popular pastime of the rich. Men think no more of crossing the Atlantic nowadays than they used to think of crossing the Channel; a trip to Cairo seems to them less formidable than the journey from London to Brighton seemed to their ancestors.

But there are others less fortunate in the matter of finance; men whose income seems small as compared with the size of their family, and who find a holiday month spent in the Highlands or at some favourite watering-place too costly to be contemplated.

To such Britons I would say, *Try Belgium.*

The primary advantage is that you are soon there; you may consider home just 'over the way.'

For the Easter excursionist there are special tickets at a considerable reduction, which permit the landing at Ostend, a visit to Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, Antwerp, and back to England by way of Harwich. Or he may continue his journey from Brussels to Namur and Liège, and see some of the beauty of the Ardennes.

But I am not writing this article so much for the excursionists as for paterfamilias, who wishes to give his wife and his growing-up boys and girls the maximum of pleasure at the minimum of expense.

There are three routes now from which intending visitors to Belgium may make their choice. A boat from St Katherine's wharf sails twice a week direct to Ostend; but this is really intended for the transport of luggage, although some well-seasoned travellers who do not dread *mal de mer* avail themselves of the accommodation provided. It is usually a matter of twelve hours from London to Ostend; fair or foul weather making a slight difference. The price of a first-class through ticket is ten shillings; return, and available for two months, fifteen shillings. Bicycle, two-and-sixpence.

Then there is the line from Dover to Ostend by one of the splendid Belgian steamers, which accomplishes the distance in about three hours; price of a first-class ticket, ten francs fifty-five centimes, or eight-and-six; return, available for fifteen days, seventeen francs fifty centimes. The third route is from Tilbury to Ostend, and was only started in the summer of 1896. A first-class return ticket, and available for two months, is issued at the low price of eighteen francs.

I will now suppose our British holiday-maker to have landed with his family in Belgium.

Ostend possesses no very great charm for quiet people. It is a desert for nine months in the year, and crowded during the remaining three months by pleasure-seekers of all nations—and not invariably respectable. It is the paradise of

ladies who change their toilette four and five times a day; of card-players; and frequenters of the casino.

Paterfamilias will do well to get his luggage through the Customs as speedily as possible and step into the train, which always awaits the arrival of a mail steamer, and will set him down in twenty minutes at the station of the old historic town of Bruges.

'A dull old hole,' I have heard it called, by those who have given it but a passing glance. But I would suggest that a city which is the capital of West Flanders, and boasts a population of between fifty and sixty thousand inhabitants, cannot legitimately be called a *hole*. And then as to dullness—well, it is mainly a matter of temperament, but no one need sit down and be dull in Bruges unless he requires something very exciting for the filling of his days. A newly-arrived party of Britons will probably go to a hotel for the first night, and then look about for the accommodation to which they incline.

These hotels are numerous, well-ordered, moderate in their charges. Reductions are invariably made for a lengthened stay, but the price per individual and per diem is eight francs at the most expensive; six, five, and four francs at those of a secondary order. For this sum the visitor will have a breakfast of coffee and the excellent rolls for which Bruges is noted. Dinner (and a substantial dinner, enough to satisfy the hungriest hobbledohoy) at one or half-past. Tea or coffee in the afternoon. Supper at seven, which is to all intents and purposes dinner over again *minus* the soup. Beer is included in the charge; wine is the only extra.

But the travellers whom I have specially in my mind's eye will not stay longer than a night and day at a hotel.

Some will want apartments, others will prefer boarding in a *pension*, others again will try and make 'home away from home' by renting a furnished house. Either of these desires can be gratified at a cheap rate.

Several of the principal shops in the Rue des Pierres and the Rue Flamande—the best streets in the town I should say—let the upper part of their commodious houses either to summer visitors or to those who contemplate a more lengthened stay. The price is from one hundred to one hundred and twenty-five francs a month (£4 or £5), according to the number of rooms. A private door takes you up a rather steep staircase—for, let me confess that Bruges is not quite up-to-date in the matter of staircases—to the first floor, where you will find drawing-room, dining-room, and generally two bedrooms, constituting the *appartement*. If you want more bedrooms, they are usually available, but on the second floor. It answers to the London flat. If you have not a servant with you, it is possible to hire one who has been accustomed to serve English people, and has some knowledge of their ways and customs, as well as of their language.

And here, by the way, let me assure the untraveller Briton that he will experience very little difficulty in making himself understood in his native tongue. The better classes speak French, but they have almost invariably studied English. In nearly every shop there is some one who will understand your orders and respond in

a manner which you will at least comprehend. And many of the poor who have never grasped any other French expression than *merci* and *bon jour* can say a few English sentences; besides their Flemish—almost precisely the same as Dutch—being tolerably easy to make out.

But now as to the *pensions de famille*, of which there are several. The price for a single guest is five francs per day; everything except wine or beer included. A reduction is made for a family, and also for a prolonged stay. The meals are regular and well served, and you are made thoroughly comfortable. Your bedrooms will be well furnished, and there is a capital dining-room and drawing-room for general use.

The visitors who prefer a furnished house may be suited for the price of £6 or £8 per month. I will not say that the fitting-up will be new or luxurious; but everything is clean, and nothing essential is left out.

Of course in Bruges as elsewhere there exist people who will endeavour to fleece the unsophisticated tourist; but I am giving the fair and regulation prices for board, lodging, and accommodation.

And now, what is there to see? What is there to do?

The town itself is full of interest, for at every turn you come upon some old monument of the past. Quaint pigeon-roofed houses dating from the 15th and 16th centuries border the canals which intersect the city and are spanned by the wooden bridges which give the name to Bruges (*Brugge*, Flemish for 'bridges.') Of the seven parish churches, at least five are splendid specimens of the architecture of old times, and they are enriched by many of the masterpieces of Flemish painters.

The hospital of St John contains the pictures of Menling; the Palais de Justice boasts the celebrated chimney-piece in oak carving, the work of a prisoner of the 16th century while awaiting his sentence, and judged so marvellous an achievement that it gained him his liberty. The tomb of Mary of Burgundy is to be seen in the beautiful old church of Notre Dame. From the tower of the belfry the eye travels over miles of open country as far as Ghent. And then the carillon! that chime made famous by Longfellow and which nothing in Europe can surpass. Space fails me in which to tell of all the visitor will find to see in this old Flemish city; of all that will strike him as a pleasing change from his home-surroundings.

And now what is there to do? For the resident English people—residents for a year or two, and therefore a component part of a numerous colony—there is as much friendly visiting as he may wish for, capital skating in winter, lawn-tennis and golf in summer. Excursions to the fast-growing watering-places of Blankenberghe and Heyst, or across the Dutch frontier to quiet Sluys and back again by way of Knocke, the village on the sandy dunes which certain optimists believe will grow into a fashionable resort. For the passing visitor who possesses a bicycle, or hires one in the town, there are good level roads which will take him in all directions through quaint villages, and past the red-roofed cottages from which the children in wooden sabots run out to gaze with

admiring yet critical eye at his skill with the wheel.

The artist or the photographer will find no lack of charming 'bits' to reproduce; notably the lake called the *Minnewater*, the *Béguinage*, the ancient gates of the town which still exist, the Bourg, and the Quai du Rosaire.

The Wednesday and Saturday markets afford an amusing study of Flemish manners and customs, and wonderfully cheap *bric-à-brac* may be picked up at some of the stalls—if you understand the art of bargaining.

Bruges possesses a pretty little park wherein a military band (and there are three stationary regiments) plays at noon every Sunday during the spring and summer of the year; there are also twelve concerts on Thursday evenings beginning in the month of June. On the Grand Place there is music on Saturday nights, usually by the band of the 3d Regiment of Lancers.

Add to all this the frequent *fête* days on which the townspeople are all astir, and the villagers flock in from day-dawn, and I think my assertion is proved that the visitor to Bruges need not be dull unless he chooses.

But as no rose is without a thorn, I will admit that all is not charm which our eyes rest on, or our ears take in. The beggars are a distinct nuisance to the Englishman, from the old women in shabby hooded cloaks who curtsy and mumble, and point to their mouths by way of pleading for food, to the insolent *gamins* who beg for 'a cents' or cry mockingly, 'Oh yes, oh yes,' if you fail in generosity.

Another drawback arises from the low price of gin, and the great taste of the Flemish for that particular refreshment. A gorgeous religious procession in the morning is certain to be followed by a somewhat uproarious evening; groups of men, women, lads, and girls returning to their homes decidedly the worse for the '*druppels*' which have been served to them at the almost innumerable *estaminets* and cafés and the small shops where drink is sold—in combination with potatoes, sewing-cotton, groceries, and other articles in constant use.

For the information of families who incline to try the educational advantages of Bruges for their children, I must mention an excellent English college for boys where the terms are reasonable and inclusive; a good Anglo-German school for girls; lessons in singing, music, painting, at a fee which will make the heart of the over-burdened father rejoice within him.

There is an English church, an English bank, and an English circulating library. A few words must be said as to daily expenses. Money certainly goes farther in Bruges than in some places; a franc, as a rule, does the work of a shilling.

Wages are low; labour is cheap. The rent of unfurnished houses is wonderfully little, especially of large ones which are not in such constant demand as the smaller dwellings. Groceries are dearer than in the United Kingdom, but not so dear as it was a few years ago. Bread, even where there is a general outcry at the last rise—is twenty-eight centimes the kilo, which means less than threepence for a two-pound loaf.

The price of vegetables is nominal; for half a franc you will get both a large and a varied stock.

So, however warmly we may agree with the sentiment of the old song, 'There's no place like home,' I think many British men and women will find a stay in Bruges to be very economical, and very pleasant.

A ROGUE'S ERRAND.

II.

THAT evening he and Mr Jevons played cards as usual, at first as partners at a rubber of whist, finishing up with euchre after their opponents had retired for the night. It was the mail officer's practice to indulge in a couple of jorums of grog by way of 'nightcap,' and it had seemed to Dare a custom worthy of imitation. To-night, when they were in the middle of their second glass, said Dare: 'By the way, as I was rummaging over my portmanteau this afternoon I came across a flask of liqueur given me by a friend before I left London, and the existence of which I had clean forgotten till I saw it again. It was recommended to me as something very choice and rare, so much so, indeed, that the supply of it, which is limited, is nearly all bought up by wealthy connoisseurs, which accounts for its hardly ever finding its way into the market. I don't think that a nip of it, by way of wind-up, would do either you or me any harm.—What say you?'

After a little protest on Mr Jevons's part, which was easily overruled, Dare went to his cabin, and two minutes later came back with a small wicker-covered flask. A steward having brought a couple of liqueur glasses, he proceeded to fill them out of the flask, and then passed one across the table to his friend. So pleasant and peculiar did Mr Jevons find the flavour of Dare's *Eau de Plaisir*, as the flask was labelled, that he was persuaded into taking a second 'thimbleful.' Then the two shook hands, bade each other good-night, and made their way to their respective berths.

Mr Jevons had taken off his coat, and was in the act of winding up his watch, when a sudden giddiness came over him, causing him to lurch forward and nearly fall on his face. This was succeeded by a dull buzzing in his ears and by the dancing of a multitude of black motes before his eyes. Never had he felt in the least like it before. He seated himself on the edge of his bunk in the hope that the feeling would pass off in the course of a minute or two. But presently he became conscious that an unconquerable drowsiness was stealing over his faculties; his eyelids felt as though weighted with lead; he tried to stand up, but his limbs refused to do their office; the buzzing in his ears became louder till it seemed like the rushing of a great river; he was just able to reach forward and extinguish the cabin light, and then he sank back on his bed and knew nothing more.

At eleven o'clock all the saloon lights were

put out save one, which was turned half-way down and kept burning through the night. At midnight it was the rule that the lights in the cabins and state-rooms should be extinguished, after which hour the passenger portion of the big ship was given over to solitude, the only visible creature being the night steward, who kept watch and ward during the dark hours.

It was about half-an-hour after midnight when the door of Eustace Dare's cabin (which, as there happened to be a paucity of passengers, he was fortunate enough to have to himself) was cautiously opened to the extent of an inch or two, and then presently wide enough to allow of his head being protruded through the opening. Having satisfied himself that the steward was engaged elsewhere, he slipped out, shut the door softly behind him, and made his way with stealthy footsteps to the cabin of Mr Jevons, which was not more than a dozen yards from his own. A moment he stood listening with his ear close to the panel, then he turned the handle, stepped boldly in and closed the door.

In the cabin it was pitch dark, only the port-hole was faintly defined as a disc of blackness a shade less intense than that which framed it. Dare could now distinguish the low regular breathing of the sleeping man. 'So the *Eau de Plaisir* has not failed to do its work,' he whispered approvingly to himself. (His first act on reaching his cabin after parting from the mail officer had been to administer to himself a powerful emetic.) From the dark lantern he had brought with him he now flung a cautious ray around. In his berth lay Mr Jevons, only partially undressed, just as he had sunk back when overcome by the narcotic; had the vessel blown up just then it would scarcely have aroused him. Dare now began to ransack the officer's clothes in his search for the key of the mail-room, but it was not till, last of all, he thrust his hand under the pillow that he found it. The blood seemed to tingle to his finger-ends as he grasped it.

His next proceeding was to disguise himself by means of a false beard, which, both in colour and shape, bore a close resemblance to the one worn by Mr Jevons. He had brought with him from London a collection of a dozen or more artificial beards and moustaches, so that, with the aid of a pair of scissors, he had easily trimmed one of them to meet the requirements of the case, while his own dark brown moustache, when joined to the beard, made the resemblance still more striking and complete. Next, after having slipped off his lounging jacket, he inducted himself into Mr Jevons's dark blue coat with its gold stripes, and finished by putting on the peaked cap which that official wore as a part of his uniform. Then, with a handkerchief pressed close to his face, he stepped out of the cabin and pulled to the door after him.

Half a minute later he had unlocked the mail-room door and passed in. He had brought his lantern with him, and the instant he had opened the slide his eyes sought the pigeon-hole in which, a few hours earlier, he had seen the packet which, he felt all but sure,

contained his uncle's will. There it was still. Two strides forward and it was in his grasp. One glance at the seal was enough. His heart gave a great bound, and for a moment or two the floor seemed to heave and subside under his feet. Thrusting the packet inside the breast of his coat, he shut the slide of his lantern, and opening the door, passed out and locked it behind him. On his way back he was fortunate enough not to be accosted by any one.

Next morning Mr Jevons was too unwell to rise, nor did he quit his berth till late in the afternoon. He could scarcely doubt that it was Dare's liqueur which had affected him so strangely, and yet Dare himself had partaken of the stuff as freely as he had. That it had contained a powerful narcotic was next to a certainty; but why it should be worth anybody's while to administer a narcotic to him, Herbert Jevons, was a mystery. His first thought on waking had been to feel for the key of the mail-room, which he found exactly where he had left it; there, too, were his coat and vest just as he had hung them up a minute prior to his strange attack. Nothing, to all appearance, had been touched.

On quitting his cabin he made it his first business to find Dare.

'I say, young man,' he began, 'that must have been queer stuff you gave me last night. It made me feel half silly and sent me into a sleep from which I didn't wake till Simmons came and shook me, and told me it was past ten o'clock; and not only that, but I've had a beastly headache all day, and don't feel good for much even now.'

Dare opened his eyes and gave expression to his astonishment in terms which might easily have deceived a much more suspicious man than Mr Jevons.

'It had no such effect on me,' he said; 'in fact it suited me so well that I'm going to have a nip of it now by way of pick-me-up before dinner.' They were close by his cabin as he spoke. He at once opened the door and went in, and, while Mr Jevons looked on, he filled a glass from the flask of *Eau de Plaisir*, and sipped it with much apparent gusto. It was from a different flask, however, than the one he had produced the night before.

The mail officer knew not what to think.

Eustace Dare was back in London within three weeks of the day he had left it. His first and most pressing necessity was to ascertain the state of his uncle's health, and whether he was still occupying his rooms in Devonshire Street. As it would not have done to write to Mary Everson, lest the letter should be seen by his uncle, who was acquainted with his writing, as soon as the lamps were lighted he took up a station near the house, and waited with such patience as he had at command till some one whom he could question should appear. Fortunately he had not waited long before a youth in buttons came up the area steps, whom he at once hastened to accost.

'Mr Armishaw, sir, died a week since, and was buried yesterday,' said the youth in reply to his question.

The news, although not wholly unexpected

—indeed, of all possible news it was that which he had been most anxious to hear—came upon him with something of a shock. After a moment or two of silence, he said to the page: 'And Mr Armishaw's niece, Miss Everson, what has become of her?'

'Miss Everson is still here, sir. Her mother has come up from the country to stay with her.'

This was enough for Dare. Three minutes later he was shown into the drawing-room, where Mary and her mother, both, of course, in deep mourning, were seated. Mary rose to her feet as he entered. Dare, looking sympathetically grave, advanced and held out his hand, only to perceive next moment that his doing so was deliberately ignored.

'I did not reach town till a couple of hours ago on my return from New York,' he began; 'consequently I have only just heard of my poor dear uncle's death.'

When he had got thus far he became aware that the set, statuesque face, lighted by two coldly contemptuous eyes which were now gazing steadfastly into his, appertained to an altogether different Mary Everson from the one he had heretofore known. That such a transformation boded him no good he needed no one to tell him. It seemed to him as though his heart were gripped by a hand of ice.

'Immediately after your uncle's death I cabled to his lawyers in New York,' said Mary, speaking in such chilling accents as Dare had never heard from her lips before. 'It was at his own wish, expressed to me only a few hours before he died, that I did so. One of Messrs Spurling's clerks is now on his way to England. If you will leave your address, Mr Dare, I will take care that his arrival is at once notified to you. And now I must ask you to read this letter, which reached your uncle about three weeks ago. He himself gave it to me to read, and at the same time he told me his reasons for discarding you, which I had never known before.—This lady is my mother, and if, when you have read the letter, you should have any questions to ask, she will endeavour to answer them.' She bowed slightly, and turning, walked slowly out of the room. It was a distinct relief to Dare when those two unwavering eyes, fired with a scorn too intense for words, no longer dominated him.

The letter Mary had given him to read was the one written by his wife to Mr Armishaw.

Two days later Dare received a summons to meet Mr Winch of New York at Devonshire Street. He went with a heart that beat high with exultation. All the lawyer would have to do would be to inform him that, in the absence of any will, he, Eustace Dare, was Mr Armishaw's heir-at-law. Of course inquiries which would necessitate a certain amount of delay in the final settlement of affairs would have to be instituted with regard to the missing will, about which Mary would doubtless have spoken to Mr Winch. But not all the inquiries in the world could restore it to existence. It lay fathoms deep among the Atlantic ooze.

Eustace Dare went to the meeting like a man treading on air; he came back from it half an hour later looking like a criminal who had

just been condemned to undergo a life-long sentence. After all, it turned out that Mr Armishaw had made an antecedent will, and that almost immediately after his quarrel with his nephew and when his feelings were very embittered against him. By that document he had cut Eustace off with a hundred pounds a year; whereas by a clause of the second will—the one which had been destroyed—he had increased the allowance to five hundred a year. Roguery, as it so often does, had overleaped itself. Verily Eustace Dare had his reward.

We are not concerned with the way Mr Armishaw had devised his property, but it may be taken for granted that Mary Everson's name figured prominently in his will.

SOME INDIANS OF THE CHACO.

ALL students of geography are aware that there is in the interior of the South American continent a large tract of territory, extensive as many a European state, known by the name of the Gran Chaco. It may be said to extend into four republics, those of Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, and Paraguay, and has really no very defined limits, 'the Chaco' in those regions being used to mean the wildernesses which are still in the hands of the aborigines.

Any one taking up a good atlas will find marked on this part of South America the names of various Indian nations, each of which disputes with the others possession of the densely forested districts which lie to the westward of Paraguay. It is of some two or three of these races, the Chiriguanos, the Matacos, and the Tobas, that we will attempt to give a description.

Being occupied on a sugar estate in the extreme north of the Argentine, and within a few days' journey of the borders of the Chaco, the writer has had exceptional opportunities of observing these native tribes, who are of vital importance to industry in these distant provinces. They do by far the largest part of the manual labour in the cane-fields, doing, in the hot, damp atmosphere of the plantation under a tropical sun, work which few white men could long endure. It is indeed to the sugar planter to whom they invariably come, and it is found impossible to keep them long in a place where there is no cane to satisfy their keen appetites.

In our description of these curious people we will commence by taking the most enlightened type—the Chiriguano—a jovial but thrifty and keen-witted fellow from the south-eastern parts of Bolivia.

There are, of course, to paraphrase Molière, Chiriguanos and Chiriguanos—the 'criollos' and 'forasteros'—the semi-civilised men from the Jesuit missionary centres, and the wild free type of the old pagan stock from the remoter districts of the Chiriguano countries. Nevertheless, the same characteristics are observable in all, the same cast of features and the same customs, more or less modified in each tribe. The true type of the pure

Chiriguano is a medium-sized Indian of the same mould of face as that of the North American Red Man; high cheek-bones, keen dark eyes, and long black hair coiled round his head. The lower lip is made to protrude by the presence of a heavy leaden button called a 'tembella,' removable at will, and quite available for sale should the owner be in a sufficiently hungry (or thirsty) condition. It would seem that these 'tembellas' are a characteristic of the heathen tribes, for it is rarely, if ever, found among Indians coming from the mission stations, or when found, then as a scarcely noticeable ornament. We have seen men with 'tembellas' which must have weighed several ounces, all elderly men of importance and standing among their tribe.

Many of the Chiriguanos from the missionary districts of Bolivia are a very mixed race of men, crosses more or less remote between the Indian and the white. An expert in ethnology would find much to interest him in these people, for their appearance is strikingly Mongol in type. Why it should be so we cannot pretend to explain, but Europeans have again and again remarked on the extraordinary resemblance.

Chiriguanos come and go all the year round, performing journeys of hundreds of miles from the interior of Bolivia to the Argentine on foot. They arrive in bands of various numbers, some being as numerous as two hundred men, and others a mere handful. They contract to work for three, four, or six months, and their pay they invest in clothes and mares.

Drink is perhaps a greater curse to these people than to either Mataco or Toba. At the end of each week the head of each band must have his allowance of rum for his men, though most planters take care that this is not excessive. The rum having been served out in bottles, the Indians will form into circles and commence a wild monotonous chant, lasting for hours together, the bottles meantime being passed round. Should, however, any one have managed to supplement his allowance with drink bought with his own savings, knives will frequently be drawn and a duel ensue. Two men with ponchos wrapped as shields round their left arm and claymore-like knives in their right hands, will fly at each other, and as they are expert knifemen, the looker-on will see fine fencing until either blood is shed or some one intervenes.

When sober, however, the Chiriguano is a fine labourer, capable of great endurance, light-hearted and willing. If they like their employer, they will come down year after year; his name spreads, and he has no difficulty in getting men. Should he, however, be short-tempered or not open in his dealings with the men, they soon distrust him, and henceforth he will be fortunate indeed to get any but the very riff-raff to go to him.

Chateaubriand in one of his writings makes mention of the abominable evil and corruptness which formerly prevailed among the Jesuit missions in these countries. That their influence was and still is not entirely desirable can hardly be doubted; and the big chiefs all do their utmost to oppose it. Nevertheless, the once warlike and great Chiriguano race is slowly on the wane;

the demoralising results of what is presented to them as Christianity on the one hand, their wholesale intermixture with the whites, and the constant drain of all their best men in continual wars with the barbarous Tobas who press on them from the east, all point to serious modification of the race. Again there is little doubt that in certain parts of Bolivia slavery still lingers; tales of the enticement of Indians to the india-rubber factories on the islands of the upper tributaries of the Amazon, and of their disappearance from the world from that time forward are by no means groundless. This people will shortly afford another instance of the ills resulting to the aborigines from contact with the whites.

The other two Indian races, the Toba and Mataco, are very similar in most respects, the former being however a greatly exaggerated type of the latter. Like the Chiriguano they have languages of their own: the Tobas a dialect of the Guarani, the Matacos a special idiom.

The Matacos come from the western borders of the Chaco, and occupy most of the country immediately around Rivadavia; the Tobas, fiercest of all the Chaco tribes, from all the back region, ranging more or less from Bolivia to Paraguay. As soon as the cane crop starts in the Argentine, the gorges of the hills to the east pour forth tribes of hundreds of these men, all savages armed with bows, arrows, and clubs, some even feathered and naked as in the days of Columbus. The Matacos tattoo, dyeing their faces with bluish stains; the Tobas, as an additional fascination, pierce the lobes of their ears, bringing them down nearly to their shoulders, the holes often admitting of the passage of three fingers. On the plantations they form towns of grass huts, dirty but strong. Intertribal warfare saps the strength of these nations, the blood feuds being carried on relentlessly for generations. They never forgive and never forget, and their declaration of war means a war of extermination. The barbarities they inflict on the corpses of their foes is horrible.

There is indeed much to admire in the Toba of the true Indian stock, physically and morally far superior to the squalid masses who, pauperised and resourceless, throng the slums of our great cities and form a commentary on civilisation.

At present the Toba and Mataco hold the banks of the great river Vermejo, the natural highway for the produce of the northern Argentine provinces to the big towns on the Plate. But with the opening up of the country these tribes will have to retire farther inland, and battle for elbow-room with races behind still more barbarous than themselves.

All these Indian people, when in the Argentine settlements, are so well held in hand by the whites that there is seldom difficulty in managing them. White men in whom they have learned to confide can travel into the recesses of the Chaco year after year, and will receive a welcome. But these are the few, for in their own countries their hatred for the whites is as vigorous and deadly as for any Indian tribe, and the blood feud more in arrears. Continual though desultory warfare is carried on with the Argentine soldiery scattered along the borders of the Chaco, who shoot them like dogs, and whom in return they massacre whenever they find themselves in sufficient force to do so.

So much then for these intensely interesting peoples, acquaintance with whom is well worth making ere they are driven away farther north into the utmost recesses of the continent.

MISS ALMIRA MUGGINS.

By B. SIDNEY WOOLF.

THE smoking-room of the Exquisite Club. Four easy-chairs occupied by as many men, and 'the cup that cheers' on the wicker table.

It was five o'clock on a winter afternoon, and the ceaseless roar of London rose but faintly to the thickly-curtained room. Outside, people were going about with azure-tipped noses, but inside there was a drowsy warmth and a fragrance of good tobacco. Three of us—Carter, Summers, and myself—had been grumbling at the slings and arrows of this world in general, and our hard-up condition in particular. There is a certain fascination in being bitter, cynical, and all the rest of it when you are particularly comfortable; it is like piquant sauce to a cloying dish.

The fourth man had not spoken for some time; he was a general favourite, Captain Reginald Ruthven—to give him his full title—familiarily known as 'Ruth.' Popular all round was Ruth: in the mess-room of —th, on parade, at the club, in a country-house drawing-room, or at a dance, and so languid and nonchalant with it all. While we aired our little grievances he lay back in his chair, thoughtfully puffing his cigar, his eyes half closed, while a slight smile played round his mouth.

'It's all very well you fellows grumbling about being hard up,' he said at last, knocking the ash off his cigar, 'but you may never have lost the chance I did. I might have been a regular what-d'-ye-call-him—Cræsus I mean—and got into parliament and been made a baronet, instead of plain Rex Ruthven—captain—and church-mouse, if'—

And he paused significantly.

'Tell us the "if,"' Ruth, we cried, for his yarns were famous amongst us.

'Well, it happened this way,' he began. 'When I was a youngster of nineteen or so, I lived for a twelvemonth at a crammer's in Mudford, a dull old town in the Midlands. There were about a dozen other fellows there, and between us we managed to have a pretty lively time of it. Our escapades were notorious in the neighbourhood; but, as they were quite harmless ones, the older folks winked at them, the girls smiled on us, and the small boys magnified us into heroes. I verily believe that Mudford was glad of any pebble that was dropped into its stagnant pool of conversation. Even our crammer, old Wellington Jones, let us off with a mild word of reproof, for he was a harmless sort of creature, and trembled before

the mighty Mrs Wellington. But the queerest adventure I ever had, and one about which my companions of that time chaff me even now, happened about a few months before I left old Waterloo's, as we disrespectfully dubbed our crammer. Now, one of the curiosities of Mudford was a rich old maid, Miss Almira Muggins by name, who lived in a magnificent but mouldy mansion just outside the town. She was distinctly eccentric in dress and manners, and particularly with regard to a wheezy old poodle, rejoicing in the name of Alonzo. She simply adored this fat beast, and had him dressed up in a pink satin coat and a gold collar. Rumours were current that he dined on oysters and champagne, and kept a banking account, but I believe these to be myths. Anyhow, he was a horrid little brute, with the most maddening habit of snapping at your heels; and one of his chief pleasures was to fly at small children and nearly frighten them into fits. It was not surprising under the circumstances that Alonzo was cordially hated.

'One afternoon I was walking home from a tennis-party, when suddenly shrill feminine shrieks, mingled with howls and barking of dogs, fell on my ear. I hurried on, and turning the corner beheld a cloud of whirling dust, a flash of pink satin, and Miss Almira Muggins, wringing her hands and screaming:

"Alonzo, my own darling—my sweet. Help, help! The nasty wretch of a dog! Help!"

'I grasped the situation, and feeling rather sorry for the distracted lady, around whom a crowd of gaping, grinning yokels was gathering, I made several violent lunges with my racquet at the two combatants, which took them so much by surprise that they let go. I promptly collared Alonzo, who, dishevelled and bleeding, his pink satin coat torn to shreds, made futile attempts to renew the fight with his assailant, a plucky little toy terrier. Miss Almira nearly fell round my neck, and I began to feel a bit of a fool. So I cut short all her thanks, and set off with her towards her house. I gave the dog to the prim-looking servant who opened the door. Then Miss Muggins turned and said:

"Young man, you have done Alonzo and me a great service, and we owe you life-long gratitude. I shall be pleased to know your name, and shall hope to see you sometimes. Now and then Alonzo and I are lonely. Will you take a dish of tea with me at four of the clock to-morrow?"

'The old dame with her old-world grace interested me, and I promised to come. I told the fellows about it when I got home, and they chaffed me the whole evening, and indeed it seemed funny enough to me when I came to think of it.

'Next day, a little before "four of the clock," I set out for Miss Almira's. Most of our fellows were lounging round the gate, smoking and looking out for the girls' schools that passed, and I was greeted with a perfect volley of small wit as I passed out. I didn't answer, but put on a love-sick and tragic air, enacted an imaginary love-passage between myself and

Miss Muggins, and took my departure amidst applause.

'The same prim-looking servant opened the door. The house had a mouldy smell, but the hall was very large and oak-panelled. She led me down many dusky corridors, and ushered me at last into a vast drawing-room, at the farther end of which I distinguished with difficulty the little figure of Miss Muggins. There was an air of faded splendour about the room, everything was so substantial, so out of date and yet so picturesque, that I seemed in a waking dream, which was not dispelled when the old lady rose and made me a curtsy with the grace of the last century. I bowed and sat down at her invitation. I came with the intention of staying half-an-hour, and when I at last said good-bye, I found it was close on seven o'clock. She was really a most interesting old dame, and except for her devotion to that disgusting Alonzo would have been charming. Her house was quite a museum, and she showed me some of her countless treasures. She had a story to tell about each of them, and her personal reminiscences were not less interesting. She had danced at the court of George III., and wept for the loss of Trafalgar's hero, and had rejoiced at the tidings of Waterloo; indeed she herself looked like a bit out of the last century, in her brocaded sacque and high-heeled shoes.

'I readily promised to come again, and, despite the other fellows' jokes, I soon found myself at Miss Almira's whenever I had a spare hour or two. It seemed as if the treasures of that house could never be exhausted, and together we undertook the task of rearranging them.

'You'll think she was a queer companion for a young man of twenty, but, as I told you, the Mudfordites were very slow, and I found little Miss Almira, with her inexhaustible conversation, her sharp little sayings, and cynical worldly wisdom, infinitely refreshing after the tennis playing, flirting, insipid Mudford maidens. Besides, I had always had a hankering after curios, and at Miss Almira's one lived in a world of them. So that soon the old lady and I became very good friends, and, after a while, I forgot to notice her eccentricities. I believe she regarded me like a son, and found that I supplied some want in her lonely life.

'About a fortnight before I left, I ran up to Miss Almira one afternoon, as I had promised to look through some old MSS. with her.

'When we had finished our task, the good old soul was silent for a moment. Then she cleared her throat and said:

"Reginald, I have something important to speak to you about."

"Yes, Miss Muggins," I replied, wondering what it could be.

"During the last weeks, Reginald," she said, "I have become as fond of you as I might have been of a son of my own, and I shall miss you sadly when you go. I have neither kith nor kin, and so, briefly, I have decided to leave my fortune, this house and its contents, to you. The only condition I make is, that you undertake to provide for my dear Alonzo, and make it your special duty to watch over

him and see that he leads the same life he has been accustomed to. My will shall be drawn up this evening. Don't thank me or you will annoy me."

"This speech literally took my breath away.

"But, Miss Muggins"—I stammered.

"Not a word," she said. "The tea is ready, I perceive."

"I did not know whether to regard this as eccentricity or sheer madness, but at last came to the conclusion that Miss Almira knew what she was about, and that some day I should come into the possession of a large fortune, and—Alonzo. He was a minor consideration, however, as I trusted an apoplectic fit would do for him very soon. Altogether it was a pleasant idea, and I felt very grateful to the old lady, although I could not quite grasp it. But there's many a slip, &c., as I found to my cost.

"It was hard luck, though," said Ruth, pausing to relight his cigar; "deuced hard luck.

"Well, a few nights after this little episode, I and half-a-dozen others went to a farewell dinner given by some friends living half a mile out of Mudford. We had a glorious time, champagne galore, and we decided to walk home as it was a fine moonlight night. We were in mad spirits, and as we reached the outskirts of the town we found a vent for them. Slowly crawling down the road was the one and only Mudford cab, a dejected, broken-down vehicle, driven by a sleepy man, and dragged by a spiritless and nondescript quadruped, called by courtesy a horse. It was crawling along at its usual rate of a mile a day, when suddenly my evil angel prompted me to suggest the deed that ensued.

"Here, you fellows," I said, "ten to one that old Waterloo and his lady are inside that cab; they were going out to-night. Let's drag 'em backwards and see if they notice the difference."

"No sooner said than done. No one thought of the consequences. The wilder the prank the more acceptable in our exhilarated state of mind. It was a quiet road, and we soon caught up the cab. Then seven of us held on to that old cab and pulled with might and main, while the eighth jumped on the box and gagged cabby. The unusual manner of locomotion pulled the old horse up suddenly, so that he stood on his hind-legs and then slid backwards.

"We had gone several yards in this manner, and nothing had occurred.

"Seem to be asleep inside," whispered some one.

"Shall we beat a retreat?" said another.

"Yes," was on my lips, when suddenly the cab gave a violent lurch, and we had the utmost difficulty to prevent it from overturning.

"Then a shriek of 'Help, help!' broke on the air.

"By Jove, Ruth, you'd better go round and explain," said one or two of my companions, who were beginning to sober down. "We'll get into a devil of a row over this."

"There was no escape, for I was the prime mover in it.

"So, hat in hand, I went round to the cab

door. A head was thrust out of the window, but was enveloped in shadow and a shawl, so I could not make out who it was.

"Allow me, madam, to assure you that there is nothing wrong," I began, when—Great Heavens! the light of the lamp fell on the features of—Miss Almira Muggins. She looked at me steadfastly for a second, while I felt—well, I don't know quite what I felt—demd unpleasant, to quote Mr Mantalini.

"Reginald!" she said, but words are powerless to describe the scorn concentrated in that innocent name.

"I could do or say nothing; but, mechanically lifting my hat, I rejoined my companions.

"Heavens, it's Miss Almira!" I gasped.

"They grasped the situation, and in a few minutes cabby was liberated, and the old horse whipped up to his accustomed pace. We kept discreetly in the background.

"But our victim had not proceeded two yards when again the shawl-enveloped head was thrust through the window.

"Vipers!" was all she said, but—it spoke volumes.

No one dared to laugh or even smile.

"Shouldn't advise you to retire into private life yet, old chap. Almira will cut up rough over this," said my special friend, as we watched the retreating cab.

"Yes," I answered, "I fancy I've lost my chance there. But hang it all, boys, I really don't mind much about the money, only I'm awfully sorry to have vexed the old lady. She's such a good old soul, and she'll never forgive this."

"So we went home, very much sobered down, and feeling decidedly 'chippy;' for we none of us particularly desired this little affair to come to old Waterloo's ears, as Miss Almira was thought a great deal of in Mudford, principally on account of her riches I must add.

"We'll have to apologise in a body to-morrow," said some one, "and try and mollify the old lady before she tells Waterloo. She may not take it so seriously after all."

"I had my doubts on the subject, for I knew Miss Almira well by that time, and I had discovered that she had a rooted aversion to young men on the whole, owing to their propensity for joking and nonsense in general. She once told me that I was the only young man she had tolerated since—but there she had broken off, and I naturally did not ask her to tell me more.

"At breakfast next morning a note came for me with the Muggins crest on the envelope. I and my companions of the previous evening exchanged significant glances.

"I tore it open and read:

"TO MR REGINALD RUTHVEN.

YOUNG MAN,—I have been grossly deceived, and yes, I will say it, sadly disappointed. I shall accept no apologies. Practical jokes I abhor, and can never pardon. Consider all communication between us at an end. Taking into account any former friendship I may have felt towards you, I shall refrain from informing your preceptor of last night's occurrence. I subscribe myself,—ALMIRA MUGGINS."

'When she died her money went to the Dogs' Home at Battersea.'

'Voilà tout,' said Ruth, as he re-lit his cigar.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

IN the popular enthusiasm which has greeted Dr Nansen since his return from 'farthest north,' we are apt to forget what is perhaps the most remarkable feature of his achievement. It is, therefore, as well that we should call to mind that five years ago, before our own Royal Geographical Society, he advanced certain reasons which induced him to believe in the existence of an ocean current which, tapped at the right point, would carry a voyager to, or near the North Pole. First, he pointed out that there is a great polar current running southward between Greenland and Spitzbergen, while on the other side—that is, on the Siberian side—there is a constant fresh-water current running northward, probably crossing the pole, and subsequently forming the southern current already adverted to. One proof of this was that Siberian larch and red spruce, as well as relics of the *Jeannette* expedition, were carried as driftwood to the shores of Greenland, and of it the Eskimos made their sledges and boats. Another was that mineral dust, and those microscopic organisms known as diatoms, peculiar to one side, were carried to the other in the form of mud. That Dr Nansen's surmise was correct is a matter of common knowledge, and now, five years after his first appearance before the Royal Geographical Society, he has been able to point out before the same body how nearly the actual route taken by the *Fram* corresponded with that which he had marked out for himself. The dust, the diatoms, and the driftwood gave him the hint; thus exemplifying once more the truth of the old saying about great events springing from little causes.

Another claimant to the honour of having solved the secret of colour-photography has arisen in the person of M. Cassagne, who has brought before the Society of Arts a method which certainly has the merit of novelty. Unfortunately there is a secret solution employed, so that we are quite in the dark at present as to the real nature of the discovery, if a discovery it be. We can only give an outline of the process, which is as follows: A negative is taken on a plate which has been treated with the above-named secret solution, and from that negative a positive is produced on a plate also doctored with the mystic fluid, or on sensitive paper if preferred. Neither negative nor positive exhibits any colour, but when the latter is immersed in three separate baths of dye—red, green, and blue—the colours are taken on to the picture and sort themselves so that each gets into its right place. The fact that this is the case is vouched for by the highest photographic authorities, but how the thing is achieved no one but the inventor knows. The chief difficulty seems to be in guessing how a positive image, which has never been near the object which it represents, but has simply been printed from a negative which may have been taken a thousand miles away, can exercise

selective colour absorption. As we understand the method is patented, the secret, whatever it may be, will soon be public property.

The motor-car excitement has now to a great extent calmed down, and so few horseless vehicles are to be seen in the streets, even in London itself, that the presence of one invariably draws a crowd around it. In the meantime several interesting trials of road vans for carrying different kinds of merchandise have been made, and some of these have given promising results. Messrs Thornycroft, the well-known engineers, lately started one of these vans from Chiswick to Cardiff, a distance of about one hundred and sixty-four miles. The van carried a load of half a ton of asbestos, and successfully concluded the journey in twenty-five hours, without stopping for repairs or any other purpose. The motive power was steam, and we presume that the engine was fitted with a tubular boiler of the Serpollet pattern.

Machines for the saving of household labour are many, and are likely to increase now that electricity for motive power can be brought to our doors. The other day we described an appliance for ridding furniture and carpets of dust by means of suction bellows. Our attention is now directed to a floor-scrubbing machine, a practical demonstration of which was given lately at Newcastle. This useful mechanical housemaid will scrub the floor, collect all the slop and dirt as fast as they are formed, and wipe the boards dry into the bargain. Moreover, this work is done more thoroughly than by hand, for the use of the machine allows the water to be used at a very high temperature. The machine is placed on the market by a syndicate at Middlesborough.

The French school at Delphi has lately unearthed two slabs of limestone which bear an inscription which is of great interest, dating as it does from the fourth century B.C. This inscription, which consists of about two hundred lines, gives the price of work for building operations in Greece at the period named, and from it we learn that an architect was paid at the rate of under £30 per annum. This is not a great sum, even if its purchasing power is multiplied, as it should be, by five or six.

The idea of making wine in Britain from anything more pretentious than rhubarb, currant, cowslip, or elderberry would seem to be extremely quixotic. But it is a fact that after twenty-one years' trial, Lord Bute has, at Cardiff, succeeded in making the industry pay. Starting with three acres of vines, of a description which was known to thrive well in the colder parts of France, and planting on a sunny slope, in light and porous loam, he regarded the results as so promising that at the end of ten years he laid out eleven acres more. In 1893 he obtained from these fourteen acres a yield of forty hogsheads of wine, which is about seventy per cent. of what a full crop from the same acreage would yield in Germany. This wine fetched in the market three thousand pounds, and some of it, on resale, was disposed of for a hundred and fifteen shillings per dozen. During the twenty-one years there were, of course, bad seasons and good, some years being altogether barren, but, on the whole, the enterprise has succeeded in a way which is astonishing, considering the fickleness of our climate.

At a recent meeting of the Royal Botanic Society, London, the secretary, Mr J. B. Sowerby, showed paper made from some stems of the Egyptian papyrus, which had been grown in a tank in the society's gardens. The papyrus may be described as a tall, smooth reed, with a delicate white pith, from which the ancient Egyptians made a writing material by slicing the pith into flat strips, laying them side by side, and uniting the whole by pressure. The Greeks and Romans, after long trial, decided that papyrus was more reliable than parchment; and that the material is wonderfully durable is shown by the many documents which have been preserved through thirty centuries or more. A piece of the new papyrus alluded to above was compared with an old specimen from an Egyptian tomb, and the only difference between the two was the darker colour of the older piece. It is a curious circumstance that the plant is now extinct in Lower Egypt, where at one time it was so abundant.

A correspondent, dating from Sydney, New South Wales, calls attention to the urgent want of legislation to protect the Australian fauna. He says that in a few years many species will become extinct, owing to the indiscriminate slaughter which goes on. 'It is a common thing now to see great wagon-loads of the skins of the kangaroo, the wallaby, the opossum, and other animals passing through our streets for shipment to London, where they bring high prices.' Our correspondent states that in Tasmania the greed of the traders has already cleared the ground of many animals, and he cites an interesting experiment made by the government there, in order to remedy the evil. One hundred kangaroos were turned loose, but, having been partly tamed, they did not return to the wild state, and quickly fell victims to the hunters.

Unfortunately it is not only in Australia that the land is being denuded of its animals, as well as of rare plants and insects. Both the Norwegian government and that of the United States have established sanctuaries, with excellent results, and such a course is being adopted for the preservation of big game in other countries. It has recently been suggested that such a place of refuge is highly desirable in England, and that no better sanctuary could be found than the New Forest, Hampshire—which at present is the happy hunting ground of sportsmen, botanists, and entomologists. A correspondent of the *Times*, who suggests this scheme, very pertinently writes: 'Possibly a few years hence the present craze for regarding everything wild as a proper subject for self-appropriation, for destruction, or for the gratification of the vanity of the "sportsman," will have passed away, and our descendants will be wondering how we can have allowed a common inheritance to be lost by the selfishness of individuals. Surely the native species of a country are as worthy of preservation as the west front of a cathedral, or an historic monument; for are they not older than all building or all history? and, alas! when once destroyed can never be supplied.'

Some interesting notes regarding the researches of Mr J. E. S. Moore, who was sent out to Africa last year by the Royal Society to study the various organisms of marine type which had been discovered in Lake Tanganyika, have recently

been published. Mr Moore verified the previously recorded presence of marine shells and medusæ in the lake, and he also corroborated the statement by former travellers of the curious behaviour of a large fish, which rushes at the paddles of a canoe passing through the water. The lake seems to teem with fish, and Mr Moore caught great numbers by trailing a line with an artificial minnow attached behind his boat. Many of these fish weighed as much as sixty pounds; there is also found in the lake a sort of mud-fish, ninety pounds in weight, and a large electric one, which gives a severe shock on being handled. On the east side of the lake, in a bay in which the striped leech abounds, Mr Moore found a small fish which was marked in imitation of the leech, a case of protective mimicry apparently, for the kingfishers, while constantly picking up other small fish, carefully avoided this one. In a fight between a leopard and a crocodile, which seized the leopard when it came down to the edge of the lake to drink, a very exciting contest was witnessed. The leopard attempted to escape, but the crocodile had seized it by one of the hind-legs, and eventually succeeded in pulling the limb clean off. The leopard shortly afterwards died on the bank of the lake.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the second-class carriages on our railways are so unprofitable that many of the companies have followed the example of the Midland Railway, and abolished them, leaving their patrons to sort themselves into first and third class grades. Last May this same question was discussed by the South Western Railway directors, and the general manager expressed the opinion that if the second-class fares were reduced so as to be only 20 per cent. more than the third, instead of 50 per cent. as of yore, there would be plenty of patronage for them by persons who would willingly pay a little more for the advantage of more select fellow-travellers. The scheme was adopted, and its success has proved the soundness of the manager's conclusions. On 1st May the reduction in second-class fares was made, and during the seven months ending 3d November there was an increase of nearly one hundred thousand second-class passengers—representing a gain to the company of nearly £17,000. During the same period, too, the first-class passengers have increased in number, showing that the second-class traffic has not benefited at the expense of the first.

Many machines have been devised for writing shorthand on the typewriter principle, but none has proved very successful. But a better result is anticipated for a shorthand machine recently invented by Mr J. F. Hardy, which has the great merits of being small, compact, silent in action, and inexpensive to produce. It measures 8 by 7 inches, and is about 4 inches high, and it possesses only six keys, by the various combinations of which a dot-and-dash shorthand of the Morse kind is printed on a sheet of paper, in regular lines, which begin and end automatically, without attention by the operator. The patentee declares that it is easier to become proficient with this machine than to acquire ordinary shorthand, and using the pen. One obvious advantage of such a system is that any one acquainted with it can readily decipher the signs, and change them

into longhand. At the same time it is evident that were such a machine successful enough to be generally adopted, compositors in printing offices would be instructed to set up type direct from the machine record, so that there would be no need to translate the words into longhand.

The youngest student of geology or fossil hunter knows what an ammonite is, but perhaps he does not know that the only living representative of the very large family of ammonites is the Pearly Nautilus, an interesting creature allied to the cuttlefish, about the growth of which in its younger stages hitherto little has been known. In order to study the subject completely, Dr Arthur Willey, of University College, London, sailed for the South Seas two and a half years ago, in search of the eggs of the Pearly Nautilus, and it has recently been reported to the Royal Society—under whose auspices the research has been undertaken—that after considerable trouble, and by the construction of a submarine cage, in which specimens of the nautilus were fed daily, a number of eggs had been secured. Each egg is as large as a grape, and is deposited separately. It is necessary, in order to understand the structure and manner of construction of the beautiful chambered shell of the nautilus, that the gradual growth of the young in the egg should be carefully observed, and doubtless by now this hitherto blank page in the book of knowledge has been filled in.

It has hitherto been the custom when a valuable steel-engraving has had the authorised number of proofs printed from it, to break up and utterly destroy the original plate. In this way much beautiful work has been lost to posterity. We are glad to learn that this rule will now in certain cases be relaxed, and that, by arrangement with the Printers' Association, engraved plates will be sent from time to time for exhibition at South Kensington Museum, it being understood that no one shall have access to them excepting for purposes of study. Some say that the modern photogravure has killed steel-engraving, just as the wood-engraver suffers by the introduction of an allied process. But it is more than probable that line-engraving may see a revival, and the exhibition of the best examples of the art for the encouragement and emulation of students is one of the best means to bring about so desirable a result.

All who are engaged in practical electrical work know how, in the neighbourhood of dynamo machines, all steel tools are turned into permanent magnets. A workman will take from his bench chisels, gouges, or hammers, and will show how strings of nails will depend from them, just as if they had been purposely, instead of accidentally, magnetised. Unfortunately the same effect is produced upon the steel parts of an ordinary watch, the hair-spring, lever, escapement-wheel, &c. being turned into magnets should the wearer approach certain electrical apparatus in action. This magnetisation of the steel parts of a watch will throw it completely out of gear and will sometimes stop it altogether; hence visitors to electrical works are generally careful to leave their watches in the care of the hall-keeper. But in spite of all precautions a watch will often become affected, and various means of demagnetising it are known. Mr T. W. Lewis, president of

the Horological Society of Philadelphia, recently read a paper before the Franklin Institute upon this important subject, and described an apparatus which he had devised for destroying magnetism in watches. It consisted of an appliance for giving the watch a horizontal and vertical rotary movement while it was drawn slowly in and out of a helix of wire through which an electric current is passed. By this means the polarity of each steel part of the watch is changed with a gradually diminishing force, until each is restored to its normal condition.

Most of the wells in and near London which used to be celebrated for their supposed curative properties have disappeared under the advance of bricks and mortar. Even the famous chalybeate spring in Well Walk, Hampstead, runs so slowly that an analyst the other day collected only one gallon in four hours. The water from this old well used to be so much valued that it was bottled, and sold in various parts of the metropolis, and was eagerly bought by numbers who believed in its virtues. A new chalybeate spring was recently discovered near Hampton Court under curious circumstances. The South Western Railway Company had sunk a well for the purpose of getting water with which to wash down their carriages, but they found that the water contained so much iron that a rusty deposit was left by it, and the well has had to be abandoned for that reason. It is now suggested that this water, although unfit for washing purposes, would be valuable medicinally, for analysis shows that it is similar to the Wells of Tunbridge, Whitby, and Scarborough. Moreover, as the yield is 20,000 gallons a day, there is plenty of water to supply a public drinking-fountain, which would be greatly valued at a place so much resorted to as Hampton Court.

THE WEST INDIA REGIMENT.

THE Commander-in-Chief having by his recent thoughtful action directed attention to the West India Regiment, and the powers that be having just resolved to add another battalion to it, it may not be out of place to give a short sketch of the corps that is vaguely known to the public as a portion of the British army which consists of black men officered by white men.

The regiment is composed of two battalions, with a dépôt at Kingston, Jamaica. One battalion is on service in the West Indies, with headquarters at Jamaica; the other on the west coast of Africa, with headquarters at Sierra Leone. Once posted to the regiment, an officer passes his whole career in it, unless he exchanges or is specially transferred. This means that an Englishman accepting a commission in the corps practically becomes alienated from his native land until he severs his connection with the army. His military service is monotonous and spent in a dangerous climate; and he constantly endures hardships which are unknown to the great majority of his more favoured comrades at home, in India, or at other foreign stations.

Recognising his disadvantages, Lord Wolseley has brought about an increase in the pay of the West India officer, who will now, while actually

serving on the west coast of Africa, receive additional pay at the rate of 3s. a day, or £54, 12s. yearly. This will, no doubt, reconcile the recipient to much that is hard in his lot.

There were originally twelve West India battalions. Of these some traces have been found. Tradition adds four more, but there is reason to believe that these four were mythical, and existed on paper only. The present 1st and 2d Battalions came into existence just over a century ago, in 1795. In the same year the 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th Battalions were also raised, but these were disbanded—the 3d and 4th in 1819, and the 5th and 6th in 1817. A 7th Battalion was raised in 1796, and in 1798 the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th Battalions were formed; but all these were disbanded in 1802. Afterwards several of the battalions were re-raised and again disbanded—the whole proceeding being somewhat bewildering. The 4th, for instance, was re-raised in 1862, and disbanded in 1869 in Barbadoes and Demerara. The 5th was resuscitated in 1863 in Jamaica and Lagos, non-commissioned officers and some men from the disbanded St Helena Regiment and the Gold Coast Artillery being transferred. This battalion was again disbanded in 1865.

The West India Regiment claims to be the lineal descendant of the Royal Carolina Regiment which was sent to the West Indies on the conclusion of the War of Independence in 1776. The claim of the corps to be a royal one was to a certain extent allowed when, on the amalgamation of the 1st and 2d West India Regiments, they were granted the garter and the garter motto—worn by royal regiments only—on their helmet-plates, &c. The wreath on one side of the badge now worn is the English laurel; on the other the Carolina laurel, another vestige of the old title.

The regiment has a very strong establishment of officers—5 lieutenant-colonels, 6 majors, 17 captains, 42 lieutenants, and 18 second lieutenants. The junior ranks, therefore, are in much greater proportion to the senior than is the case with the line, the West India having 60 subalterns to 28 captains and field officers; and the line having 30 subalterns to 22 of the higher ranks.

Most of the non-commissioned officers and men are coloured, and are recruited chiefly in Jamaica. A number of the staff sergeants are white. A peculiarity of the corps is that a portion of the men are to some extent instructed as artillerymen, and do duty as such on the west coast when called upon. The West India battalion numbers 1011 of all ranks; the African has a total of 912; and the dépôt 300.

No very long time has elapsed since the two battalions were, to a great extent, recruited from Africans, but the enlistment of these negroes has ceased, and the regiment now consists mainly of West Indians. Of these men Colonel Ellis, in his excellent history of the first West India Regiment, spoke in the warmest manner. That officer knew them well, and he put it on record that these English-speaking negroes of the West Indies are docile, patient, brave, and faithful, 'and for an officer who knows how to gain their affections—an easy matter, requiring only justness, good temper, and an ear ready to listen patiently to any tale of real or imaginary grievance—they will do anything.'

Uniforms of line infantry pattern are worn by

the officers and English staff, Zouave dress being worn by the West Indian non-commissioned officers and men. The picturesque Zouave dress was introduced in 1857. Until that time the uniform was the same as that of the line. The facings nowadays are white, but at one time they were very varied—the 1st Battalion's being white, the 2d yellow, the 3d blue, the 4th green, and the 5th red.

The peculiar nature of the services of the West India Regiment is shown by the battle-honours officially borne—'Dominica,' 'Martinique,' 'Guadeloupe,' and 'Ashantee.' Such are the honours as they are given in the *Army List* to-day; but the list is not complete, for there are other distinctions to be granted for the brilliant and arduous work by the West India Regiment in Africa in the years 1892-94.

MISSED.

I MISS you, dear, in the spring-time when the willows blossom whitely,

When the sloe boughs bloom and burgeon, and the blackbirds build and sing,

When over the sky of azure the white-fringed clouds pass lightly,

When violets wake in the woodlands, and the corn blades freshly spring.

But I miss you, too, in summer when the waves break on the shingle,

When the languid lilies' perfume is wafted upon the breeze,

When creamy, and pink, and fragrant the roses nod in the dingle,

When the kingcups turn the meadows to glistening and golden seas.

And I miss you more in autumn when in rustling corn-fields yellow

Reapers sing their lays of gladness, when the plovers loudly call,

When the woods are gold emblazoned, and the apple orchards mellow,

And the bramble red and purple where the ripened berries fall.

But most of all I miss you when the snowflakes white are flying,

When the days are dark and dreary, and the nights are long and drear;

When through leafless forest branches winds are sadly sobbing, sighing,

Then it is I think I miss you, oh, the most of all, my dear.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.

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THE BELEAGUERED LADY.

By H. D. LOWRY,

AUTHOR OF 'WOMEN'S TRAGEDIES,' 'MAKE-BELIEVE,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

OF what happened before the time of my coming into Western Cornwall I have not space to tell. I struck away to the north coast as soon as I was able, and arrived presently at a village two miles to the east of Newky. Here I stayed until the evening in the cottage of a widow woman whose son had fought at Launceston, and commended me to her when he knew that I was wanting to get westward to St Michael's Mount. Towards dark I continued my journey to Newky.

It had been my purpose to find some one who should take me by water 'round the land,' as the saying is, and give me the opportunity to land on the Mount. The harbour, I knew, would be closely beleaguered, but there were ways known only to a few of entering the castle once the Mount had been gained, and this last I could manage securely enough, being from boyhood a swimmer and accustomed to long hours in the water. My dear love was upon that rocky island, and I swore it would take more than all the forces of the Roundheads to keep me from her arms.

I could find no man ready to do the whole of what I desired, for I might not inquire very openly; but in the end I came upon one who was prepared, for a consideration, to land me on the coast hard by St Ives, and this suited my purpose hardly less admirably. I knew the country field by field, and almost yard by yard. It would be strange if I could not get down quietly to the marshes by Marazion, and take an opportunity to swim across and land upon the Mount under the cover of night.

It was about nine o'clock at night when we set sail, and I fell in very readily with my companion's mood of silence. Duty had taken me away from the west, but now it clearly called me

back again, and the thought of this necessity was inexpressibly grateful. For in the castle the Roundheads were so intent on capturing was the old chaplain's daughter, Rose Mundy, whom I had loved since she was a child. She was a sort of companion to my Lady Basset, wife of Sir John, and almost like a child of the house.

'Have you heard anything of how the Parliament men are placed?' I asked my companion presently.

'The most of them lie about the shore, and some upon the Mount itself,' he answered. 'Some are farther inland, on the hither side of the marshes. But you must see for yourself, or inquire by the way. I fancy there be some 'pon top of the Great Carn, too.'

It was lucky I knew the country, for this disposition of the enemy meant that I should have no easy task to accomplish in gaining the Mount. However, I did not greatly fear, and when we landed, shortly before the dawn, on the beach called Porthrepta, which lies a mile from St Ives along the bay, I paid the sum that I had promised with a good heart, and set forth into the inland country towards where the Mount lay, a few miles southward on the other side of the county.

The land rises very steeply until you are some three hundred feet above the sea. The face of it is mere wastrel: gorse and heather and bramble-brake give hiding to foxes beyond numbering, and there is no place better for the purpose of them that love to see the drawing of a badger. I mounted slowly, and as the dawn came, away in the east, I got more and more sight of my troubled country. I mounted to the old pack-road, and then, swerving a little to the right, as if

St Ives drew me towards it, I crossed a waste space, and mounted to the summit of a hill whence I could look westward, in the direction where my heart already was.

The summit of the Mount, and that alone, was visible, with the sea shining betwixt that point and the little town of Penzance. It seemed that all the land was utterly deserted, for I could discern no token of human life. I had food with me sufficient for the day, and rested in the wood for many hours, my eyes always on the Mount. No one came near me.

Presently I saw that one thing which the owner of the boat had told me was true. The Great Carn, as it is called, is the highest of all the hills in that neighbourhood, and a rude wall of granite surrounding its flattened summit proves it to have been a fortification for many a long day. It gives a view of a big stretch of country, and I saw that a party of men—not more than thirty in number, as I counted them—were occupying it. It was certain I must keep clear of the Great Carn in my advance.

Towards sunset I decided it was time to be moving, and set forth towards the south, going from plantation to plantation, and never more than a few minutes out of cover. I came at last to a little farmstead well known to me of old, and dear because I had often visited it with Rose. The thatch shone a warm brown in the last rays of the sun; the rooks cawed as of old from the ancient elms surrounding the cattle-yard. But when I stood upon the threshold and looked into the kitchen I beheld the huge black hearth all empty, and at first there was no answer to the call I raised.

Presently, however, I heard foot-steps moving slouchingly upon the planking overhead, and an old and querulous voice was heard: 'Who's there, and what do 'ee want?'

'Tis I—Dick Harvey,' I cried, recognising the voice as that of the farmer's mother, an aged and decrepit dame, long since past work or activity, 'and my want is news of the Mount and of the people there.'

'Now hush, for mercy's sake,' said the old woman. 'There's no tellin' who may hear. To think that I should live to see the country plunged in war: I, whose father was carried, a child, out o' Newlyn when the Spaniards burned Paul Church.'

'Is there no news?' I asked.

'None to tell of, except that the Parliament men hold the country all around Marazion, and mean to have the castle. There was what they do call a *sortie* the other day, and some killed on the sands, so they say. John is gone to sell them some cattle, I believe, and Jane wouldn't hear o' stoppin' here, so she's gone across the bay, over to Gwethan, with the children.'

'And where are the soldiers?' I asked.

'Everywhere, I believe, my dear,' she said.

'Then 'tis a poor look out for me,' I said, 'for I am going to sleep in the castle to-night. Shall I give your love to Rose?'

'Tis no good for you to tell me that,' she said, looking at me in amazement. 'There's a mort of soldiers betwixt here and the shore; the causeway is guarded, and the castle is all surrounded. Better fit you stop here and wait until peace do come again.'

I laughed, for the information she had given me was extremely pleasing. 'The causeway is guarded, is it?' I asked. 'That means that the tide is to be out to-night, and that they will look for attack from the land-side. Their watch upon the sea will be the less careful, and I shall find it easier to swim out and get ashore. If you will give me a sup of milk and something to eat I will be gone, for I would not care to disturb Rose from her slumbers, and I must see her ere the night is out.'

Having thus put aside her advice, which must still have been disregarded had it been backed by reasons infinitely weightier, I swallowed a morsel of food, and continued my journey to the marshes, continually upon the alert lest I should come inadvertently upon the troops who were said to be waiting on their lither side.

CHAPTER II.

My object was to cross the marshes, where I should be absolutely under cover, then strike across the low hills that stand betwixt them and the back of Marazion village, and take to the sea as near as possible to the Mount. I could see the goal of my hopes before me now, and the lights of it beckoned me on.

To cross the marshes is a hard enough thing by daylight, and none but a fool or a man who knew them well would make the effort at night. I had known their secret pathways from a child, and yet I was afraid of the task of crossing in the dark.

I had reached the last bit of cover, and was within fifty yards of the tall bulrushes whose gentle rustle I could already hear, when a sound of voices struck upon my ear. The sound came from the west, and I crept in that direction upon hands and knees, which soon were sadly lacerated by thorns and the fallen spikes of the gorse. Once my heart came into my mouth. There came on a sudden a shrill shriek of terror. I had startled a blackbird from its nest, and thus it expressed its indignation at my intrusion.

I paused, holding my breath, and instantly heard footsteps advancing, and voices raised in a discussion. 'Fools,' said one man; 'tis only a blackbird frightened by a fox or a stoat. The village folk are little given to late hours and wide wanderings in these days.'

'Doubtless you are right, Zachary,' said another. 'But the orders are to keep a close watch, and orders are made to be obeyed.'

'It seems to me we have done sufficient watching,' rejoined the first speaker. 'We can only expect that the malignants will come to the succour of their party if we continue to wait for them. I am sick of watching: we ought to assault the castle in good earnest while the rear is still unhampered. Then we should be safe against the biggest force that could come against us.'

'Have you not heard?' cried a new voice. 'Well, I suppose it was meant to be kept secret; but we attack the castle to-morrow. Is that good news to you?'

'Good news indeed!' cried the man whom they called Zachary. 'Now, Tom, art willing to leave bush-beating to silly boys, and furbish thy arms against the morn?'

They moved off in the direction of their encampment, and I breathed again. The man Tom had been wandering about in the bushes while

the conversation was in progress, and once he had come perilously near to treading on me. It would have meant his death had he come nearer; but I was not in the mind to die at the price of the life of a single Puritan. I waited a while, and then retreated in the opposite direction to that in which they had gone. Presently I stole across the open and entered the marshes.

Progress was difficult indeed. I had no desire to cause the outbreak of noises not natural to the night; but the marshes were full of wild fowl, and I could not but startle some of these. It seemed to me that my own progress must arouse attention if there were any watchers in the neighbourhood; for, with the utmost care taken, I still fell frequently, through jumping upon delusively firm-looking places, and more than once I sank to the middle and half thought myself lost.

I was wet from tip to toe, and gaggled in the muck of the marshes. My progress was wearying in the extreme, and I was often at a loss for breath. Suddenly a voice startled me, coming like a thunderbolt from the direction in which I was fain to go.

'Who goes there?' cried a voice. 'Answer and come forth, or I fire.'

I had the sense to slip from the more or less solid patch of ground on which I was standing, and lie at full length, my face pressed to the ground, my body half sunken in water and mire.

'Come forth, I say!' came the summons again, and again I did not answer.

I had not long to wait. An explosion rent the silence, and a bullet rushed through the air above me, and immediately the tops of one or two of the bulrushes, severed by the bullet, fell around me. Immediately afterwards I heard my unseen enemy advance, muttering, to the edge of the marsh, and make a few floundering footsteps in my direction. Then there came a splash and a volume of imprecations as he fell forward upon his face.

I could not but laugh aloud, and as the man withdrew to safe ground his imprecations were renewed. It struck me suddenly that this mishap of his might have spoilt his powder. At any rate there was no particular danger in a discreet effort to discover whether this was so. I therefore moved through the bulrushes.

The next words of my enemy assured me I was right. 'Come forth and surrender,' he said, 'or I fire again.'

I did not answer; but the gun was not again discharged. I waited a little longer, and then moved slowly and carefully away from his neighbourhood, still skirting the edge of the marshes. In the course of time I deemed myself arrived at a place of safety. I sought the edge of the marsh, and slipped across the open space to the hills. I crossed these discreetly, and presently came in full sight of the Mount. Then I descended to the beach, lingered a moment in the shelter of the rocks while I put off some of my clothing, and made sure that my knife was secure. Finally I waded out through the earliest waves, and took to the water.

It was a warm summer night, and the stars shone clearly overhead. The sound of the waves breaking on the shores of the bay did but intensify the stillness. I could have fancied all the world was listening as I swam onward.

I had gone out on the side of the Mount which faces Penzance; but as I came closer I swerved a little eastward and drew near to the mouth of the harbour. The causeway was visible as a black line beyond it. I listened and heard voices. Once I was seen, or at least heard, for a stone came hurtling through the air and splashed into the water close beside me, and I heard a voice say: 'If we don't kill that old sea-otter, the capture of the castle will leave me discontented. It has more lives than a cat.'

Not being the creature they took me for, I lay still upon the water and listened. There were a multitude of men gathered about the little harbour and where the causeway touches the Mount, and I could hear them as they laughed and jested. Long as the evening had been to me, the hour was not yet nine, and they were enjoying the coolness of the night.

Having thus rested for a while, I resumed my swimming. On such a night of quietness it would have been possible to land at any point that might be chosen; but, with the sea neutral for the nonce, I had enemies upon the land, and I purposed to go to the outside of the island and get ashore at a point whence it would be easy to climb to the castle unobserved. Once arrived so far, I did not doubt that I should be able to enter. I knew the castle well, and I, if any one, could have led a storming-party with some hope of success. Moreover, I could not banish from my mind a perfectly unreasonable conviction that Rose was aware of my propinquity, and would be upon the alert to give me easy entrance to the place.

It is a longer swim around the island than one would think, and I was not a little tired by my adventures in the marshes, and by the sleepless hours which had passed since I left Newky on board the little boat. Once I was vastly startled by coming within a yard or two of that same sea-otter to which I owed something of my safety hitherto, and disturbing him as he lay upon his side on the gently-heaving water.

At last, however, I looked inward, and saw that I was within fifty yards of the appointed goal. I turned towards the land and swam gently to the landing-place, my heart beating adventurously as I thought of all that might happen in the next half-hour.

Suddenly, when the rock on which I was to land was almost within grasping distance, I stopped, and could have sunk like a stone for very fear. A man stood waiting for me, and I saw that he was leaning upon a matchlock.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND.

BY A PRACTICAL TEACHER.

THE parish schools of Scotland, not the least valuable portion of the legacy bequeathed to his country by John Knox, survived with little modification in their character and constitution until the year 1872. Gray-headed Scotchmen of the present day, if their boyhood was spent in a rural district, retain a vivid, and on the whole a kindly recollection of the old-fashioned 'dominie' and his ways. Appointments to the office of school-master, before 1872, were made in the parish

schools by the heritors, or proprietors of land within the parish, and the parish minister. The examination to which candidates were subjected was by no means formidable, the chief requisite being a fair acquaintance with classics and mathematics. These candidates, however, were generally men of superior scholarship and ability, especially in the northern counties of Scotland, where they were mostly graduates, and made the schoolmaster's desk a stepping-stone to the pulpit. The appointment once made was virtually irrevocable, *ad vitam aut culpam*, as formally expressed—which meant that the teacher was safe in his position so long as no gross moral delinquency could be proved against him. In his own domain the schoolmaster was omnipotent. He made his own code, and feared no interference. His methods of discipline were of the sternest, often barbarous in their severity. To go no farther back than the beginning of the present century, the personal memoirs of Hugh Miller and William Chambers furnish striking illustrations of the brutality exercised in the schools of that period. There was no appeal from the tyranny of the master.

'In the business of elementary instruction,' says Chambers, 'the law of kindness was as yet scarcely thought of. Orders were sometimes given to teachers not by any means to spare the rod. "I've brought you our Jock; mind ye lick him weel!" would a mother of Spartan temperament say to Mr Gray, at the same time dragging forward a struggling young savage to be entered as a pupil.' Once a year the presbytery examined the school publicly, which for weeks before buzzed like a bee-hive with a busy hum of preparation. Lessons were learned by rote. Specimens of handwriting were produced with painful elaboration. The momentous day arrived. The precincts of the school became the scene of unwonted bustle. Vehicles thronged from all quarters of the parish. Parents in their best attire were arrayed round the schoolroom to witness the triumph of their own darlings, or, alas! to share in the mortification of failure.

The ministers entered amid a hush of awe. There was usually among them one towering personality, who made himself spokesman for the rest, who condescended occasionally to supplement the master's questions, and who, when the well-drilled battalions had passed under review, gave expression to the customary congratulations. There was the humorous clergyman, who was jocose over blunders and oddities, and even winked a sly aside to the boys; and there was the clergyman of stern and solemn aspect, in whose countenance there seemed to be concentrated the darkest gloom of Calvinistic theology. If the school happened to be near the manse, and the wind was favourable, whiffs of savoury odours began to float about after midday. Then a manifest restlessness became apparent among the clerical gentlemen. Satisfaction with half-examined classes was hurriedly expressed, and offers of a further display of acquisitions were courteously waived aside. The clergyman dined with the parish minister, other visitors dined with the schoolmaster, and thus the great day was pleasantly ended.

But all this is now changed. Early in the present century the attention of parliament was directed to the condition of the endowed schools

in England. The restless and fiery energy of Lord Brougham urged on the investigation with unrelenting vehemence, startling those drowsy and antiquated institutions from the lethargy into which they had gradually sunk. The spirit of inquiry, once aroused, did not again fall asleep. The condition of the elementary schools came next under scrutiny, and parliament gradually approached the conviction that the education of the children in the land was a duty which it was bound to see properly performed, and that money might be as judiciously expended in training the young as in equipping fleets and organising armies. To this result the aspiration expressed by Wordsworth may have contributed:

'Oh for the coming of that glorious time
When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth
And best protection, this imperial realm,
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
An obligation on her part to teach
Them who are born to serve her and obey;
Binding herself by statute to secure
For all the children whom her soil maintains
The rudiments of letters, and to inform
The mind with moral and religious truth
Both understood and practised—so that none,
However destitute, be left to droop
By timely culture unsustained, or run
Into a wild disorder, or be forced
To drudge through weary life without the aid
Of intellectual implements and tools;
A savage horde among the civilised,
A servile band among the lordly free.'

Up to 1872 the interference of the State in elementary education in Scotland aimed more at encouragement than control. Training colleges, largely supported by public money, were established in the large towns. Grants were apportioned to teachers, who obtained a government certificate by examinations in these colleges; and these grants were paid annually, after the inspection of the schools of which these teachers were in charge. The Disruption of 1843 had brought about an anomalous state of matters. The Free Church, severing itself from the Established Church, built schools as well as churches in almost every parish. In the rivalry thus created, the parish schoolmaster had the best of it as regards income and position. He had security of tenure, and part of his emolument was derived from the heritors, as a charge upon the land set apart for that purpose at the Reformation. The waste of power and conflict of interests thus created were summarily ended by the act of 1872, which effected a complete revolution in the system of Scotch education. The schools were removed from the control of the Presbytery and the heritors. In every parish a School Board was constituted by popular election, to which the duty was assigned of carrying out the regulations which the Education Department might issue. The right to appoint and dismiss teachers was handed over to the Board, and from its decisions there was no appeal. Its term of office was fixed for three years. The pecuniary aid given to education was largely increased; but the money was apportioned on a new principle, namely, payment by results. A monetary value was affixed to all the passes in all the subjects of examination, and the sum thus earned was the grant for the year. The regulations of the Department were embodied in a code, to be published annually, and one might observe how the timid and tentative supervision

of the past had developed into a system of the most exacting scrutiny and control. Like the elephant's trunk, the Department found nothing too large or too little for its grasp. It regulated the dimensions of gigantic edifices and the size and shape of a child's pinafore. Many of the earlier regulations have been found unworkable and oppressive during the twenty-four years since 1872, and they have been modified or abandoned. The system as it operates at present may now be briefly sketched.

The total yearly grant awarded to a school, the payment of which places the school under the control of the Department, is the resultant of various complex estimates. Thus, there is paid on the annual average attendance of each scholar ten shillings; if singing is well taught, one shilling; if discipline is good or excellent, one shilling or one shilling and sixpence. On the average attendance of girls, a shilling is paid for good needlework; on the average attendance of boys, a shilling if some scientific subject is satisfactorily taught. A rising scale of value marks the various shades of merit in the appearance made by the scholars in the elementary subjects, ranging from one shilling to three shillings and sixpence in the average attendance. What are called class subjects, as English grammar and recitation, geography and history, may earn from four to six shillings on the average attendance of scholars above seven. For mathematics and languages, which are designated specific subjects, four shillings is paid for each pass. Under these regulations, the grant for the year may amount to one pound on the average attendance, more or less, according to the report of the inspector. To become entitled to this money, the school must be conducted in strict conformity with the regulations of the Department. The attendance must be marked twice a day, and the work of teaching performed in accordance with a timetable approved by the inspector.

Six standards of examination are appointed, as annual steps in the ladder of progress. The sixth requires ability to read with good expression, to write a letter clearly and correctly, and to solve questions in vulgar and decimal fractions, in compound proportion and interest.

The inspector may visit the school at any time, but as a rule he comes once a year for the annual examination. For a few weeks before inspection the teacher has a busy and anxious time. He must prepare from the statistics of the year a number of schedules dealing with intricate details and calculations, any error in which may postpone or imperil the grant.

The examination is a very business-like process, as devoid of display as an official audit. Class after class is rapidly tested; the skilful probe of the inspector soon finds out the points of weakness or strength. There are those who say that no man not infallible is competent to estimate accurately in four hours—the time usually occupied in examining a rural school—the work of the teacher during the whole year; but as all human judgments, even those of the judicial bench, are liable to error, we cannot look for infallibility in inspectors. They are, on the whole, men of high character, superior scholarship, and long training, and they acquire an instinctive power of appreciating the general tone

of a school. The report of an inspector, after it has been considered at headquarters in London, is sent back to the School Board, and usually becomes a subject of much local comment and criticism.

A few comments, made in all fairness, may now be allowed. The primary purpose of the present system is to secure for every child a sufficient training in reading, writing, and arithmetic, so that when he leaves school he may be furnished with a mental equipment which shall qualify him to become a capable and intelligent citizen, even if no further study be possible, or shall form a solid basis on which he may build higher or more special instruction. This object has been, on the whole, obtained; and the result is of such immense value that it may well counter-balance a host of alleged drawbacks and defects. No longer do we see in our country schools ungainly rustics, verging on manhood, returning for the winter to rub shoulders with little boys, and laudably and painfully trying to make up for the lost opportunities of earlier years.

The teachers, again, if they lost something by the revolutionary legislation of 1872, have also gained something. Their salaries have been nearly doubled since that time. In the first half of the century the incomes of parish schoolmasters might range from £60 to £100; in the same class of schools now they may range from £120 to £200.

One of the greatest boons ever conferred on the working-classes became possible only under the present system. This was the abolition of fees, or rather the release from the obligation to pay them; for the fees are not extinguished, but the government comes to the relief of the parent, and pays them out of the Probate Duty.

But, admitting all these advantages, there are features of the present system open to strong objection. The old schoolmaster was an individuality, and generally one of pronounced characteristics. The free development of his own nature, the play of his own innate qualities, the independent bearing which he could at all times maintain, gave him an influence over young minds which the teacher of the present day can scarcely hope to acquire. No man can guide others well who must himself walk in fetters; and the teacher is now so hampered, so harassed, by a multitude of minute regulations, that his own idiosyncrasy is stifled within him. If he has ideals of his own, he must sacrifice them. If he feels the promptings of originality, he must crush or disguise them; for originality is the bugbear of officialism. Again, the pecuniary estimate set upon his labours, the absolute necessity of maintaining the annual grant at a high level, if he is to hold his situation, compels him in too many cases to think of that alone, to lose all discrimination of the various capacities and complex nature of the strange little community over which he rules, and to sacrifice all considerations to the paramount one of making a showy but superficial display of attainments on the great day of examination. The mature mind takes no harm from cramming. When a man like Lord Macaulay masters a new language in a few weeks for the sake of historical research, there can be no other feeling than admiration at the feat. It is quite otherwise with juvenile natures, still immature. Under a system of education which resembles the

forced vegetation of the hothouse, the young mind often becomes sickly or distorted, loses the fibre and stamina which are the result of slow and natural growth, and, to vary the metaphor, nature revenges herself, as she generally does in a case of surfeit, by rapidly getting rid of the overload.

One continually hears the phrase, 'The school has *earned* a large grant,' as if the minds of young children were mere machinery to be driven fast or slow, for profit.

Some years ago an important modification of the Code was made, under which the passes of individual scholars in the three elementary subjects were no longer rated at a specific sum; but it would be a mistake to suppose that the principle of payment by results has been abandoned.

The mode of estimating the results has certainly been altered from the appraisalment of the individual scholar to that of the class; but as a sliding scale of merit, determining the grant awarded, is attached to this appraisalment, the system is still that of payment by results, and open to all the objections which have been urged against that system.

MY LORD DUKE.*

By E. W. HORNUNG.

CHAPTER XV.—END OF THE INTERREGNUM.

NOBODY was about when they dismounted, so Jack himself led the horses back to the stables, while Olivia gathered up her habit and scaled the steps. The stable clock struck five as the former was returning by way of the shrubbery; another seven hours and Claude would come home with the news. For such an issue it was still an eternity to wait. But Jack felt that the suspense would be easily endurable so long as he could have sight and speech of Olivia Sellwood; without her, even for these few minutes, it was hardly to be borne.

Yet this stage of his ordeal was made up of such minutes. He returned to desolate rooms. Olivia had disappeared; nor could he pitch upon a soul to tell him where she was. Door after door was thrown open in vain; each presented an empty void to his exacting eyes. He ran outside and stood listening on the terrace; and there, through an open upper window, he heard a raised voice railing, which he could not but recognise as that of Lady Caroline. Her words were indistinguishable. But as Jack looked aloft for the window, one was passionately shut; and he neither heard nor saw any more.

The first persons he ultimately encountered were Mr Sellwood and the agent. They had golf-clubs in their hands and wholesome sweat upon their brows. The agent treated Jack as usual; the Home Secretary did not. He stated that he had at last won a round; but his manner was singularly free from exultation; indeed, it was quite awkward, as though perfect civility to his host had suddenly become difficult, and he was ashamed to find it so. Certainly there had been no difficulty of the kind before; and Jack noted

the change, but was too honourable himself to suspect the cause.

He next fell in with the Frekes. This excellent couple loved Jack for his goodness to their children, who were not universally popular. They now carried him off to tea in the nursery, where he stayed until it was time to dress for dinner. Jack liked the children; it was not his fault that they were so seldom in evidence. They were obviously spoilt; but Jack thought they were taken too seriously by all but their parents, who certainly did not take them seriously enough. So he had many a romp with the little outcasts, but never a wilder one than this afternoon, for the children took him out of himself. Their society, had he but known it, was even better for him in the circumstances than that of Olivia herself; it was almost as good as another meeting with Dalrymple of Carara. He rose at length from under his oppressors, dusty, dishevelled, and perspiring, but for the moment as light-hearted as themselves. And there were the grave, sympathetic eyes of the parents resting sadly upon him to recall his trouble. Why should they look sad or sympathetic? Everybody had changed towards him; this was the difference in the Frekes. Could they have divined the truth? No suspicion of a broken confidence entered his head; yet it was sufficiently puzzled as he dressed, with unusual care, to make a creditable last appearance at the head of the table which would prove never to have been his at all. He had quite made up his mind to that; he found it appreciably harder to reconcile himself to the keen disappointment that now met him in the dining-room.

Olivia was not coming down.

'She has knocked herself up,' explained Lady Caroline tersely. 'So would any girl—not an Australian—who rode so far on such a day. Your Grace might have known better.'

Jack stared at her like a wounded stag; then he uttered an abject apology, for which, however, he obtained no sort of a receipt. Lady Caroline had turned and was talking to some one else. But it was not this that cut him to the heart; it was her mode of addressing him, after their conversation of the early morning.

Somewhat later he remembered that railing voice, and the shutting of the window upstairs; and with a burning indignation he divined, all at once, who it was that had been so spoken to, and why, with the true cause of Olivia's indisposition.

This was in the darkness of his hut, with Livingston asleep in his lap. In another minute Jack was striding through the pines, on his way to the drawing-room for a few plain words with Lady Caroline Sellwood. He never had them. Lady Caroline was gone to bed. It was almost eleven; within an hour Claude would be back, and a moral certainty become an absolute fact. Hunt's tale was true. Had it been otherwise, Claude would have telegraphed. He had left, indeed, on the distinct understanding that he should do no such thing; his mission was to be kept a secret, and a telegram might excite suspicion; yet even so, he would have sent one had all been well. Jack was sure of it; his exhausted spirit had surrendered utterly to an ineluctable despair.

In this humour he sought the Poet's Corner,

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and found its two *habitués* furtively chuckling over some newspaper. Their gaiety cut him to the quick, yet he longed to enter into it.

'What's the joke?' said Jack. 'I want something to make me laugh!'

'This wouldn't,' replied Edmund Stubbs; 'it's not benign enough for you.'

'It's only a piece of smart scribbling,' explained Llewellyn, lighting a fresh cigarette with the stump of the last.

Jack was behind them; quite innocently he put his head between theirs and looked for himself. The paper was the *Parthenon*. There was but one article on the open page. It was headed—

'OUR MINOR POETS:

XXVIII.—MR CLAUDE LAFONT.'

'So that amuses you?' said Jack at last.

'Quite,' said Llewellyn.

'You think it just, eh?'

'Oh, hang justice! It's awfully nice copy. That's all it has any right to be. Justice doesn't matter a hang; the *Parthenon*'s not written for the virtuous shopkeeper; it isn't meant to appeal to the Nonconformist Conscience.'

'Besides, the article is just,' protested Stubbs. 'We know what Lafont is, between ourselves; he's an excellent chap, but his poetry—save the mark!—would hardly impose upon Clapham and Wandsworth. His manner's cheap enough, but his matter goes one cheaper; it's the sort of thing for which there should be no charge.' Stubbs drained his glass.

Jack was blazing.

'I don't know what you mean by "cheap,"' he cried; 'but from reading that article, which I happen to have seen before, I should call it a jolly "cheap" word. I don't set up to be a clever man. I only know what I like, and I like everything of Claudie's that—that I can understand. But even if I didn't I should be sorry to go about saying so in his own house!'

'His own house!' exclaimed the Impressionist.

'We didn't know it was his,' said Stubbs.

'What's mine is Claude's,' replied Jack, colouring. 'It was before I turned up, and it will be again when—whenever I peg out.'

With that he was gone.

'Sounds suicidal,' remarked Llewellyn.

'Or celibate,' said Stubbs, replenishing his glass.

'Poor beast!' concluded the artist.

But here their host returned.

'I'm very sorry, you fellows,' said he, with absurd humility. 'I'm all off colour to-night, and I know I've made a rude ruffian of myself. Some of these days you'll understand; meantime, will you forgive me?'

'I have nothing to forgive,' replied Llewellyn.

'We'll say no more about it,' said Stubbs.

And Jack shook hands with them both before leaving them for good; then he hurried through the length of the building to the great conservatory, where Stebbings was putting out the lights. The conservatory was at that extreme of the Towers which the dog-cart would pass first. Here, too, was room and air for a man distraught. So Jack called out to Stebbings to leave the lights on longer.

'And light some more,' he added suddenly. 'Light up every lamp in the place! I shall stay here until Mr Lafont returns.'

'Yes, your Grace.'

'Stebbings!'

'Your Grace?'

'I beseech you, don't call me that again! I—I'm not used to it, Stebbings—any more than you're used to me,' added Jack inconsequently; and he fled into the grounds until the old man should be gone.

The night was very dark and heavy; clouds obscured the moon, shedding a fine rain softly upon drive and terrace. Jack raised his face, and a grateful sprinkling cooled its fever. He longed for a far heavier fall, with the ancient longing of those prehistoric days when a gray sky and an honest wetting were the rarest joys in life. Could he indeed return to that rough routine after all these weeks of aristocratic ease? The bushman might exchange his wideawake for a coronet, but could the peer go back to the bush? Time must show. The only question was whether Hunt had lied or told the truth; and the answer could not be much longer delayed. Already it was half-past eleven; there was the clang creeping lazily through the night, round quarter of a mile of intervening wall and half a hundred angles.

He would have gone down the drive to meet the dog-cart; but the night was too dark; and beside him blazed the great conservatory like a palace of fire. He entered it again, and now he had it to himself; the statues among the tree-ferns were his only companions. But in his absence old Stebbings had placed a little table with brandy and soda-water set out upon it; even the butler had seen and pitied his condition.

The third quarter struck. The sound just carried to the conservatory, for now the rain was heavier, and the rattle overhead warred successfully against all other noises. The dog-cart might drive by without Jack's hearing it. The suspense was horrible, but a surprise would be more horrible still. He was becoming unstrung; why should he not tune himself up with the brandy? His voluntary teetotalism was too absurd; he had made no promise, taken no pledge, but only a private pride in his self-discipline as it had gone on from day to day. Not a drop had he touched since that afternoon at Dover so long, so long ago! As he reckoned up the time, the forgotten lust possessed him; it had been even so on Carara, when the periodical need of a cheque would first steal over his lonely spirit. He thought now of those occasions and their results; he knew himself of old; but he was no longer the same man—resistance would be ridiculous now. He took another look at the night; then he filled a wine-glass with neat brandy—raised it—and impulsively dashed the whole upon the marble slabs. The brandy widened in a shallow amber flood; the broken glass lay glittering under the lamps; and in Jack's ears the patter of the rain (which had never abated) broke out anew.

He could not account for his act; he did not know it for the culmination of an hysterical condition induced by twenty-four sleepless hours of unrelieved suspense. It was neither more nor less, and yet it enabled him to hold up his head once more; and as he did so, there—through the

swimming crystal walls—between a palm-tree and a Norfolk Island pine—were the two red eyes of the dog-cart dilating in the dark.

The great moment had come, and it was not so great after all. Jack's little outburst had left him strangely calm. He went to the door and hailed the dog-cart in a loud, cheery voice. The lamps stopped. Claude came within range of those in the conservatory, and shook himself on the steps. Then he entered, looking unusually healthy, but dripping still.

'A brute of a night for you,' said Jack apologetically. 'Take off that coat, and have some brandy. Mind where you go. I've had a spill.'

This was the reaction. Claude understood.

'Then you don't want to hear the news?'

'I know it. I've known it for hours.'

'That I can see you haven't. Listen to me. There was no English marriage. Give me your hand.'

It was limp and cold.

'You don't believe me,' said Claude severely.

Jack subsided in a chair.

'I can't!' he whispered; 'I can't!'

'You soon will. I wish to goodness I'd taken you with me to-day. Now listen; there was some truth in Hunt's story, but more lies. The marriage was a lie. There never was a marriage. There was something rather worse at the time, but a good deal better now. My grandfather patched it up, exactly as I thought. He packed my uncle out to Australia, and he settled two hundred a year on the Hunts, on the single condition of perpetual silence as to the connection between the two families. I've seen the covenant, and those are the very words. The condition has been broken after all these years. And the Hunts' income stops to-day.'

Jack had roused himself a little; he was no longer apathetic, but neither was he yet convinced.

'It seems a lot of money to hush up so small a matter,' he objected. 'Are they sure there was no more in it than that?'

'Maitland & Cripps? Perfectly sure; they've been paying that money for nearly forty years, and there's never been a hint at a marriage until now. Certainly there's none in the settlement. But to make assurance surer, young Maitland took a cab and drove off to see his father—who was a partner in '53, but has since retired—about the whole matter. And I took another cab, and drove straight to the old parish church facing the river at Chelsea. I found the clerk, and he showed me the marriage register, but there was no such marriage on that date (or any other) in *that* church; so why in any? One lie means dozens. Surely you'll agree with me there?'

'I must; it's only the money that sticks with me. It was such a case of paying through the nose. But what had old Maitland to say?'

'Everything,' cried Claude. 'He remembered the whole business perfectly, and even saying to my grandfather much what you're saying to me now. But I've told you the kind of man the old Duke was; he was a purist of the purists, besides being as proud as Lucifer, and a scandal so near home hit him, as you would say, in both eyes at once. He considered he got good value for his money when he hushed it up. They

showed me a letter in which he said as much. Young Maitland unearthed it after he had seen his father, and with it others of a later date, in which the Duke refused to revoke or even to curtail the allowance on the woman's death. That's all; but surely it's conclusive enough! Here we have a first-class firm of solicitors on the one hand, and a clumsy scoundrel on the other. Which do you believe? By the way, they're anxious to prosecute Hunt on all sorts of grounds if you'll let them.'

'I won't.'

'I think you ought to,' said Claude.

'No, no; too much mud has been stirred up already; we'll let it rest for a bit.'

'But surely you'll get rid of the Hunts after this?'

'I'll see.'

Claude was disappointed; he had looked for a different reception of his news.

'Do you mean to say you're not convinced yet?' he cried.

'No,' said Jack, 'I'm quite satisfied now; you hem the thing in on every side. But I wish to heaven all this had never happened!'

'So do we all; but if there was a doubt, surely it was best to set it at rest. If I were you I should feel as one does after a bad dream.'

Jack was on his feet.

'My dear old mate,' he cried, 'and so I do! But I'm only half woke up; that's what's the matter with me, and you must give me time to pull myself together. You don't know what a day I've had; you never will know. And you—my meat's your poison, and yet you've been doing all this for me just as if it was the other way round; and not a word of thanks at the end of it. Claude—old man—forgive me! Thanks won't do. They're no good at all in a case like this. What can a fellow say? If it was you, you'd say plenty'—

'I hope not,' interrupted Claude, laughing. 'Wait till you do me a good turn. You've done me many a one already, and I've never said a word.'

But Jack would shake hands, and even Claude's face was shining with a kindly light as a soft step fell upon the marble, and Lady Caroline Sellwood entered from the drawing-room. The door had been left open. But it was instantly evident that her Ladyship had not been eaves-dropping, or at least not to any useful purpose; for she planted herself before the two men in obvious ignorance as to which was the man for her. She was still in the handsome dress that she had worn all the evening, and between her plump, white, glittering fingers she nursed the purple smoking-cap that had always been—and was still—intended for the Duke of St Osmund's.

'It was no good,' she cried tragically, looking from Claude to Jack, and back again at Claude. 'I simply couldn't go to bed until I knew. And now—and now I'm torn two ways; for pity's sake put me out of *one* misery.'

'It's all up,' said Jack deliberately. He owed Lady Caroline a grudge for the shrill scolding he had heard upstairs, and another for Olivia's absence from the dinner-table. He was also anxious to see what Lady Caroline would do.

She sailed straight to Claude, holding the smoking-cap at arm's-length.

'My dear, dear Claude! How I congratulate you! I find after all that the smoking-cap, which was originally intended'—

'Dear Lady Caroline,' interposed Claude hastily, 'everything is as it was. Hunt's story is a complete fabrication; I'd no idea that you knew anything about it.'

'I couldn't help telling Lady Caroline,' said Jack.

Lady Caroline turned upon him with hot suspicion.

'You said it was all'—

He interrupted her.

'I was going to say that it was all up with Hunt. He loses two hundred a year for his pains.'

'Is that possible?' cried her Ladyship.

'It's the case,' said Claude; 'so everything is as it was and as it should be.'

Lady Caroline exhibited no further trace of her discomfiture.

'I wish we hadn't all interrupted each other,' she laughed. 'I was about to remark that the smoking-cap, which was originally intended to have what one may term a frieze, as well as a dado, of gold lace, will look much better without the frieze, so there's really no more to do to it. Take it, my dear, dear Jack, and wear it sometimes for my sake. And forgive a mother for what was said about Olivia's ride. Claude, I shall make another cap for you; meanwhile, let me congratulate you—again—on your noble conduct of to-day. Ah, you neither of you congratulate me on mine! Yet I am a woman, and I've kept your joint secret—most religiously—from mine in the morning to this very hour!'

A NIGHT IN AN EEL-SETT.

By E. R. SUFFLING,
Author of *The Land of the Broad's*, &c.

EAST ANGLIA stands pre-eminent among fishing districts for its output of the nutritious and toothsome eel—not that it cannot quite hold its own in several other products, corn, butter, and geese being among them; whilst as a set-off against these it has been trying for a couple of centuries to make a sample of eatable cheese, and has not yet met with the success which is always supposed to reward those who work and wait.

Let us look for a little at the East Anglian mode of eel-catching, and at the same time endeavour to learn a little about the fish itself. And this can perhaps best be done by visiting what is termed an 'eel-sett' or eel-station.

Picture a flat, uninteresting country, in which, on either side of a broad, sluggish river, marshes stretch away to the horizon, with here and there a few desolate trees and fewer isolated cottages, about one human being to the square mile, and you will have a fair idea of the district between Yarmouth and Acle on the river Bure.

But we sail onward for several miles beyond the old stone bridge at Acle until the river becomes fringed with tall, sighing reeds, boulders, and sedges; while the adjoining marshes, with their teeming herds of cattle, become much more picturesque by reason of the woods and plantations which now limit the horizon, and serve as wind-screens to numerous distant villages,

whose square church towers peep from their sylvan surroundings.

More human life is seen both ashore and afloat; while hard by the left bank of the river stands the grand old gate-house of St Benet's Abbey, through which is thrust the red brick tower of a colossal windmill, which, from sheer age itself, forms a picturesque ruin.

The gateway and mill-tower somehow always suggest an old valentine, in which an arrow is depicted thrust through a heart—a poetic sentiment emblematic of love. The gate and mill are, however, shorn of sentiment, and simply suggest life as symbolised by the very necessary staff of life—corn.

As we glide along we notice on the right bank a curious beamy old boat drawn high and dry upon the river-bank, and in the boat has been built an upstanding cabin, which occupies some eight feet of its total length of twelve feet, making it look an exact miniature representation of Noah's ark. It is as black and as watertight as manifold coats of tar can make it, and by the door, which looks out upon the river, stands its owner, his tanned 'slop' (or blouse) shaking in the wind, while his shapeless felt hat is so drawn down over his eyes that his bronzed features are nearly hidden, except where the last rays of the setting sun just catch his red nose and tangled wealth of flaxen beard.

'Hallo, master!' comes his cheery voice across the wind-swept water. 'Why, I certainly thout yu worn't a-comin', but I see yu've had a kinder stiff tide agin' yer. Never mind, bor! better late than never!'

I apologise for being an hour late—it is 7 P.M. instead of 6—and mooring my little *Argo* to the river's wall, step ashore and into the sett of my old friend the eel-catcher.

Tea is already made, and in a twinkling a pound of such sausages as one rarely tastes outside of Norfolk are frizzling tunefully in the frying-pan.

While they cook, making merry music to the ear of a hungry man, let me glance around the little cabin in which I sit.

Eight feet by seven; and a short man will bump his head if he attempts to stand upright. On each side a locker-bed, with straw palliasses and woollen rugs, and at the far end a little iron cooking-stove and a heterogeneous lumber of pots and pans; on a side shelf several plates, cups, and saucers in various stages of dilapidation. Above the opposite side berth hangs an ancient muzzle-loading gun, and on either side of the doorway are hanging cupboards containing more wonderful old china, bread, cheese, eggs, tobacco, powder, shot, old pipes, and what-not. Add a lumbering pair of hip-boots, a cat, an axe, sundry bottles, a few odd articles, and an ancient and fish-like smell which permeates the place, and the picture of the interior is complete, except that we see each other as through a glass darkly, by reason of the smoke, which disdains to go by the way assigned it, and forsaking the chimney, leaves reluctantly by the door.

Tea over, the aching void of an eight hours' fast being filled, and the creature man made comfortable, we turn to eels as an absorbing topic; and for fear my readers are not sufficiently grounded in dead languages to understand the

niceties of the Norfolk dialect, my old friend's conversation shall be reduced to modern English.

But before indulging in miscellaneous chat upon eels, I will endeavour to describe an eel-net as used in East Anglian waters.

The general appearance is similar to an ordinary trawl-net, but the meshes are, of course, very small. The mouth of the eel-net is weighted at the foot by a chain which sinks it into the mud, and the upper rope is just sufficiently buoyed with corks as to keep the mouth open and no more. This is done because in a navigable river, where vessels of considerable draught are frequently passing up and down, a floating top rope would become entangled between the stern post and rudder, and the whole net displaced and torn.

The top rope is therefore made of sufficient length to reach to either bank, and being fastened to stakes driven into the earth, is thus kept taut until a vessel approaches, when, if it be of fair draught, the eelman loosens one end of the top rope, which sags and sinks so that the vessel may pass over without entanglement, when it is again hauled taut and fishing resumed.

The net is tarred, and from the huge mouth rapidly diminishes to some three feet in diameter, whence it is continued in a long tail kept open by wooden hoops.

Between the hoops are 'return-pieces' of net forming a series of 'pockets' to prevent the return and escape of the eels.

Finally, the net ends in a long narrow 'cod-piece' of very fine mesh, which, when fairly freighted with eels, can be detached and a fresh 'cod-piece' fastened on.

Such a net is simple and most effective as a trap, few of the eels which once enter ever getting out again.

After a chat we turned out of the warm cabin, about 10 P.M., into the steady downpour of rain, which increased as the wind dropped. It was not a particularly cheery turn-out; but as I had come to see, hear, and learn all I could, I donned my mackintosh and stepped into the frail reed-boat by the bank.

'Just the night for them,' quoth Piscator as he shoved from the bank; 'plenty of thunder and rain and a good breeze of wind will make them run in shoals.'

The poke of the net was hauled up, and sure enough the prophet had spoken correctly, for as the end was hauled in, a phosphorescent mass of eels bulged and swayed the net in their eagerness to escape from the durance in which they found themselves.

Off came the 'cod-piece' and on went another: a process taking but a short time to perform, although the glass lantern with its feeble candle shed but a faint light on the work.

'One goes by feel as much as by sight,' replies my friend in response to my wonder at his dexterous movements.

Ashore again. The heavy poke of eels is dumped down among the wringing wet grass, and the eel-trunk drawn from the water in which it is moored by a length of chain. The trunk is simply a huge rectangular deal box, pierced full of small holes, in which the eels are deposited until the collecting boat comes round and purchases the supply.

The small door of the trunk is opened, and the mouth of the net being thrust in, the fish are shaken out, and squirm and squeeze about like a party of delirious waltzers, making a peculiar squeaking and flopping noise as they writhe and struggle for freedom; but although they know it not, 'Abandon hope, all ye who enter here,' is the unuttered quotation as the fisher pegs the lid down, and once more slides the trunk down the muddy bank into the silent black water.

It is a long, black, wet and gusty night, and once or twice the monotony of the vigil is broken by a husky hail as the huge black sail of a wherry looms up through the night, and, passing, fades away again into the darkness like some relative of the 'Flying Dutchman.' At such times the shore end of the top rope is slackened, and the wherry passes freely over, as a voice exclaims, 'What cheer, mate? How do they run?'

'Mustn't grumble,' is the reply. 'Good-night.'

And then in we turn again, and smoke, and chat, and blink at each other; while I, not being used to such all-night-sittings, occasionally give such an ample yawn that I am in fear of lockjaw or splitting the corners of my mouth.

'How many eels do you think you emptied into the trunk last haul?' I query.

'About two stone and a half,' is the reply; 'but later we shall get double that quantity.' And so we did.

'Do you ever put down your net without catching any eels?'

'Well, no; but a fortnight since I only caught 18 lb. in five nights, but that was when there was a full moon. Usually at full moon it is useless to try for eels—they will not run then; but the best time is on dark nights when there are electric disturbances in the air, and a nice rain. At such times I have seen eels crawling through the long wet grass a hundred yards from the nearest water.'

'Dear me!' I exclaim, 'and are eels, in your opinion, as tenacious of life as some persons affirm?'

'Why, master, an eel has more life in it than even a cat, and that, you know, is hard to kill. I've known eels to be frozen stiff, and to be buried in snow for days, and yet when I've put them into water they have thawed and recovered.'

'Many a time I have dug them out of the frozen mud at the river-side when the tide has gone down, and they have been so hard that I could not get them apart from the mud without breaking them, yet when I have thawed them in water they have become as lively as ever.'

'Can you form any idea how long an eel will live?' was my next question.

'I cannot, of course, tell what is the usual time they will live naturally—unless they meet with sudden death in the stew-pan—but my father kept an eel for nearly thirty years, so you see they are not short-lived fish like the herring or the sprat.'

'I'll tell you another thing, master; eels can be tamed. I have two at home which I have kept in a tank for more than two years, and they will come to the surface when I tap on the rim, and will feed out of my hand, taking shreds of meat or worms greedily.'

Now it came to my turn to add an item or

two to the general fund of knowledge. I asked my old friend if eels had scales, to which he replied:

'Maybe the very old ones have, but not the young ones.'

I was able to put him right in this matter by assuring him that all eels have scales, but of a very fine and delicate kind, and so covered with an outer skin of a gelatinous nature that one has to look very carefully to discover them.

Then we chatted about the size of eels.

'How heavy is the large one I saw in the trunk?' I demanded; for I had noticed one quite a yard long, looking like a man-of-war among a fishing fleet.

'He would go about four to four and a half pounds; but I once caught two the same night, each of which took down an eight-pound weight when I put them on the scales. They were big fellows, and I do not think many have been caught larger.'

At this I smiled, and gave him the record of several of over twenty pounds. Years ago several were caught in the Medway scaling from twenty to thirty pounds, and Frank Buckland mentions one from the same river of thirty-two pounds. Even this enormous weight was eclipsed by a mammoth eel taken at Wisbeach (in Norfolk) only a couple of years since. It was upwards of six feet long, and weighed thirty-seven pounds! 'How is that for a stew?'

'Well,' mused my companion, 'some folks may like them that size, but give me a half-pounder, which is just when the fish is in its prime for stewing. But of course for "collaring" the large eels are best, and command a higher price.'

'What do we sell them at?' Well, we sell by the stone of fourteen pounds, but when they arrive at Billingsgate they are sold by the draught of sixteen pounds.

'Taking big with little, we eelmen realise from five to six shillings a stone; but few eels leave Billingsgate under eightpence per pound, and they are retailed by the fishmongers at from ninepence to fifteenpence per pound, so you see there is a large margin between what we receive and what the consumer pays for them. Perhaps by-and-by, if the Great Eastern Railway assist us as they do the farmers and poultry-rearers, we may be able to place eels on the breakfast-table of those who are fond of the nutritious fish at from sixpence to sevenpence per pound.'

'Do you know,' I asked, 'that the eel is a most prolific fish?'

Evidently mistaking the meaning of my query, he replied:

'Perflic! I should think so. Why, I have found all sorts of odd things in the stomachs of the large ones—birds, a young duck, small fish, rats, mice, and large quantities of fish spawn. Whether they swallow these things while they are alive or after they are dead I cannot say; but all these things and many more I have taken out of two and three pound eels.'

Then I explained what I meant by prolific—bearing a large quantity of spawn.

'A four-pound eel is known to contain upwards of five million eggs!'

'Lor', master, that *may* be true, but how can any mortal man count them? Why, I once read that if a man were to count a hundred a minute for

ten hours a day, he would take sixteen and a half days to reach a million. But how could he see them, let alone count them?'

'Easily enough,' I reply; 'it is done in this way: carefully empty the spawn of a large fish into a basin; wash and separate it, and lay it out to dry upon a large sheet of glass. Turn and move it about, and when dry carefully weigh it. Then, suppose the total mass weighs eight ounces, you may take sufficient to weigh, say, a single grain, and placing the eggs under a powerful microscope, proceed to count them very carefully. Having ascertained the number in a grain, multiply that number by four hundred and thirty-seven (grains in an ounce), and the result gives the total number of ova in the fish. That is one way of counting, but there are several other methods employed.'

Thus we chatted while the rain drove down, and, despite the thick coatings of tar upon the sett, found its way into the interior by many a little unseen orifice and puncture in the decayed wood. Still, we were very snug, and varied the monotony of the long night-watch by turning out at intervals to haul up the net-tail and place the catch in the huge trunk.

Very few other fish found their way into the poke of the net, and the small bream, roach, and rudd which did make the tarry twine their temporary prison were unceremoniously pitched back into their own element when the 'cod-piece' was brought ashore.

Not a sound broke the utter silence of the night, save the ceaseless his-s-s of the wind as it swayed the tall reeds in its steady flight across the bleak and dismal marshes; but at dawn the pewit and the lark arose, the curlew gave its peculiar cry, the distant baying of farm-yard 'jowlers' was heard, cattle began to low, and with the rising sun came the first wherry, its great tanned sail glistening with the morning dew, for it had long since ceased raining.

Now the great net is drawn ashore and hung up to dry upon tall stakes; the fire is lighted in the little stove, and soon the smell of frying eels and hot coffee proclaims that we break our fast and commence another day—I by sailing back to Yarmouth, and my old friend to sleep the sleep of the tired toiler whose bread is earned while the world sleeps.

To bring this short article on the eel up to date, it may interest naturalist readers to know that Professor Grassi, the learned Italian scientist, has made such important discoveries relating to the spawning of the eel that the Royal Society of London has presented him with the Darwin medal in recognition of his services to natural history.

From the days of Aristotle to the present time, it has been a moot point as to whether the eel brought forth its young alive, or whether they were hatched after the operation of spawning had taken place.

Many savants advocated the former theory, on the ground that an eel had never been seen to spawn; but during his researches in the deep currents of the Straits of Messina, Professor Grassi has set the matter at rest by proving that the young fish are hatched after the spawn is ejected. He states that the common fresh-water or river eel spawns at the bottom of the sea, and

that the female can only carry out the operation at great depths. The eggs are not laid on the bed of the ocean, but float midway to the surface, and are there hatched, a proceeding which takes place from August to January.

The young eels appear at first like tiny, round glass rods a couple of inches long, and are perfectly colourless, even in their blood. By-and-by they flatten somewhat in form, and actually contract in length, and the blood and bile become coloured; a slight pigment permeates the little body, and in due time they take the form of small eels, or elvers, being then about two and a half inches in length. At one year old—in their elver state—they ascend the rivers, and there commence their lives as eels as we know them.

TRAPPED BY THE APACHE INDIANS.

ANY one who can tell a good yarn is in great request in the camp of a West Texas cattle ranche, and there was no one we liked so well to listen to as old Steve Jackson. He had seen so much of the seamy side of frontier life, used to tell his stories in a way which always convinced his audience of their truth, and there was such a total absence of exaggeration about everything the white-headed old man said, that I think I cannot do better than endeavour to repeat one of his own stories, in his own words, as he told it to us, sitting and smoking round the camp-fire at Jake Rustler's headquarter ranche.

STEVE'S YARN.

I.

'Well, fellows! when I was listening the other day to some of you talking about Injuns, I couldn't help sort of larking to myself to hear you argyfyng that Injuns is a badly-used lot. I noticed it was mostly the youngsters, and Jack Monroe [my poor self], who, of course, ain't been long from England, and can't be expected to know much about a cow or a Injun, that was in favour of treating Apaches and Comanches just as if they was high-toned white gentlemen that had been "cruelly wronged of their ancestral privileges," as I once read in a Eastern newspaper.

'I tell you, boys, Apaches is worse than wolves, and Comanches is something like a inferior quality of jackal.

'When I was a young man, which ain't so very many years ago, though my wool is white, I thought I would like to make my pile quicker than I could staying on the old farm, so me and a boy named Jim Slater left home, and took the train westward to San Antonio; there was no line built farther west in them days. I had heard the place spoken of as the "Terminus of the Sunset Line," and was so blamed ignorant as to think there was no country beyond, and that San Antonio was the "jumping-off place," at the very end of the world; so you may guess I was astonished when I got there to find big wagons, each drawn by fourteen little rats of Mexican mules, being loaded with grub and cotton goods to be hauled to Presidio del Norte, which they said was five hundred miles farther west, way up the Rio Grande River, where there was a town full of Mexicans and a few 'cute Americans,

who were making their fortunes trading with the smugglers from Old Mexico.

'Josh Burgess, the fellow in charge of one wagon train, with a hundred and fifty mules and ten wagons to it, offered to take me and Jim along with him, if we'd work for our grub and promise to fight like blazes if the Injuns tackled us.

'There was about twenty of us altogether, mostly Mexicans and half-breeds, and we had a considerable lot of trouble with the Injuns on the road, but didn't happen to meet up with any very big gang of them, so managed to reach Presidio with only the loss of two men, one wagon, and a dozen mules. But the Injun stories them Mexicans told me about torturing, and cutting off scalps before white people was dead, kept me oneasy a good many nights, and I used to wake up and feel my head—which had black hair on it in them days—just to make sure my scalp was in its right place.

'But I told you once before all about that trip, so I'll just hurry on and let you know what happened a few months later.

'When Jim and I got to Presidio del Norte, we found it was easy enough for a white man to make his pile there, if he had a decentish lot to start on; but with only fifty or sixty dollars each, we couldn't do no more than the "greasers" could, so we joined one of the smuggling gangs, and continued to drift westwards to Chihuahua, in Old Mexico. They've got a railway there now, and hundreds of "gringos"—as they've got the cheek to call good American citizens—live there; but thirty years ago it was a regular Mexican town.

'We had picked up a little of their durned language, and the yarns them greasers told us about mining prospects in the Sierra Madre mountains, two hundred miles farther west, made Jim and me think, if we could ever get there, we should find gold about as plentiful as coal in Pennsylvania, and silver wouldn't be considered worth picking up. Only, the country was thick with Apache Injuns, and the odds agin us ever returning was considerable. I suppose we was struck with gold fever, for we decided to go and take our chances, hoping, of course, to bring back a few bushels of the yellow metal.

II.

'Jim had a good old Long Tom army rifle, and I had a new Winchester and plenty of cartridges, so all we had to buy was a couple of mules, a coffee-pot, frying-pan, and a little grub.

'During the first few days we passed several Mexican ranches, but when we had left Chihuahua about a hundred and fifty miles behind us, the country changed a good deal. We were reaching the foot-hills of the Sierra Madres, and I never saw a finer grazing country, but black-tail deer was about the only animals to make use of it.

'The Mexicans had often tried ranching there, but they were killed out, and their wives, children, and cattle stolen by the Apaches.

'We tried to be very careful, only lighting small fires and keeping a good look-out; but it was more good luck than good management which saved us, as at that time, though we didn't know it, almost all the Apache braves were away making a big murdering and stealing raid in the state of Durango, farther south.

'As we got higher up the mountains we saw bits of old ruins, which showed us there must have been civilised people living there hundreds of years ago, and twice we came across old, worked-out silver-mines, more like large rabbit-warrens than anything else; but we didn't see the gold and silver we expected to find so plentiful, and I know neither of us would have known a rich lead if we *had* found one, though we used to chip off bits of rock, and look mighty wise, and shake our heads now and then.

'We had now got to the far side of the Sierras, looking towards the Pacific slope, and had wandered about the mountains for two or three weeks. There were lots of elk, bear, and blacktails up there, so that we had plenty of meat; but our beans and corn had played out, and we had about come to the conclusion that as prospectors we was a dead failure, and had better go back to farming, or try our hand at shooting buffalo in the Pan Handle, or cow punching in Kansas—for Kansas wasn't given over to grangering in them days, you know, boys—farmers hadn't got that far west; but it so happened we got into a bit of trouble, which turned my hair gray in a few weeks, and almost drove poor Jim staring mad.

'We was following up an old trail, which looked as if it had not been used for a hundred years; it was by far the deepest-worn trail we had come across, and in places the water had washed it out into what looked more like a creek-bed. After following it a mile or two, it led us into the mouth of a deep cañon, and the fallen rocks and timber made it impossible for us to ride farther.

'We had often heard tell of "cliff-dwellers," and we decided that, as this old path evidently didn't lead out on to the top of the mountain, it must be a way of getting to some of them old Injun headquarters, which, as you know, was generally located in the caves in the highest cliffs the blained old fools could find.

'I was curious to see what the place was like, so we unsaddled and hid the mules in the brush. It was a pretty stiff climb, and it was the most infernal-looking cañon ever I seen—almost dark at the bottom, with the cliffs each side towering hundreds of feet above us.

'At last the trail seemed to stop abruptly; we had reached the end of the cañon, and a high cliff faced us, the sides of which were perpendicular, and we failed to see what object any one could have had in getting to such a miserable dark place.

'I felt as if we were in a trap, and if any Injuns had been about they could have done anything they liked with us, so I proposed we should hurry back, and never make such durned idiots of ourselves again; but Jim said, "Hold hard! can't you see sort of steps cut in the face of the rock, and don't you see a small hole away up near the top?" It was true enough, and though I felt sort of scared and a bit giddy several times, we managed to climb up, sometimes on ledges of rock, and sometimes with the help of the rough steps.

'The hole was far bigger than it looked from below, and from the entrance to it there were twenty or thirty more steps leading to the very top of the sierra.

'We expected to find all sorts of Injun remains up there, but didn't find a single thing, except a couple of iron bars. I wanted to get away as quick as we could, and try and get back to

whar the mules was before dark; but I never saw Jim so excited; he seemed as if he had gone clean mad, and kept dancing about like a crazy man.

"You are a fool, Steve," says he. "Can't you see, man, the Indians never *lived* here, but they've been mining here, and you may bet your bottom dollar this is a bonanza, or they would never have cut all them steps."

'We had no candles, so couldn't see very far in; but we began breaking off bits of rock all over the inside of the cave, and bringing them to the entrance to examine. It all looked like ordinary stone, however, until I brought out a chunk of grayish stuff from a small upright shaft at the very end of a little passage through which I had crawled on my hands and knees, and sure enough we could see traces of native gold in it. Jim set up a shout that would have brought the Injuns on us, if there had been any within a mile; but we could do no more that evening, so climbed up the steps to the top of the mesa [mountain], and hurried back to hunt up the place where we had left the mules. We had a good deal of trouble finding a way down, but we did manage it just as it was getting dark.

'We sat up half that night making plans what to do with the pile we was perfectly sure we would soon make. My idea was to start a faro bank or a big saloon in Kansas City—which was only a little "cow-town" then—and Jim said he'd buy a few thousand cattle, and just sit down and watch himself growing into a millionaire.

III.

'Next morning, however, we realised we had a good deal of work to do before carrying out the comfortable plans made the night before. Nearly the whole day was spent trying to find a way for the mules up the mesa; and at last we had to give it up, so we hobbled out the mules near a spring at the entrance to the cañon, and carried our crowbars, spades, rifles, blankets, and dried meat up the mesa, where we made our camp amongst the fir right at the very top, and close to the steps leading down to the cave.

'We made a stock of fir torches, and did a little work that night; but the only sign we could see of any gold was at the spot where I had found a trace the day before, and it was next to impossible to work there, as, besides being so narrow, the vein seemed to end abruptly at the height of our heads, and only to continue *upwards* where we could not reach. So we were no richer that night when we rolled in between the blankets than we were the night before, and did not feel half so hilarious.

'As I lay awake I thought of a plan; and next day we measured, as near as we could, the distance from the cave entrance to the rich vein if taken in a straight line; then let a rope down over the top of the cliff to the entrance of the cave, and in this way were able to locate fairly exactly where we should start work on the top of the mesa, so as to dig *downwards* to the gold vein.

'So we started digging away at the top of the mountain, one of us working in the shaft, and the other drawing up the earth in a rough kind of basket we made out of thin fir branches.

'Well! we was getting along first-rate, and had found several small nuggets of gold, when one day I was at the bottom of the shaft, which now looked like a well about thirty feet deep, and

shouted up to Jim to climb down the rope and join me, as I was kinder doubtful whether we was working exactly in the right direction or not. He came down, and we were busy examining the sides of the shaft, when we was startled by a fiendish laugh above our heads, and looking up, saw the faces of three Injuns looking down at us. We felt completely paralysed. "Trapped, by gum!" said poor Jim; and I could feel him tremble as I caught his hand.

"We thought the Injuns would at once put an end to us by rolling stones down on us, and we said good-bye to each other; and I began to think of my old mammy a thousand miles away, and to wish I'd been a kind of a religiouser clap all my life; but, bless you, I didn't know the Apaches in them days as I do now, my boys. The fun was only just commencing for them devils.

"They kept shouting out, and telling something which we couldn't understand, until two or three more of their comrades joined them, and they all leant over the entrance laughing and jeering at us. One of the new-comers at last spoke to us in Spanish, which he could talk a good deal better than we could, having, I suppose, been taken captive at one time by the Mexicans. He made a long speech, evidently full of durned sarcasm, and said we were very brave and enterprising to come so far from home in search of gold. He said they intended to encourage our love of work, and told us we might continue to send up our buckets full of dirt, as long as there was plenty of gold with it to make it worth while for him and his friends to wait and pull the stuff up; and he let us know that when we could find no more gold our scalps and skins would be useful to them.

"There was nothing for it but to pitch in and work.

"They threw food down to us occasionally, but the beasts would only give us raw meat, in spite of us begging them to cook it, and saying we could work all the harder if well fed.

"At first we was both feeling absolutely hopeless, and our only choice seemed to be death by starvation if we refused to eat; or to work on till we could find no more gold, and then be tortured to death by those wretches above our heads.

"But there was the cave somewhere below, and if we could only work our way down to it, there was the bare possibility of our escaping that way.

"Those Injuns must truly have thought white men loved hard work, for never did two fellows work as we did; but day after day went by; we were getting to feel worn out, cramped, and stiff; the beastly raw meat they used to chuck down to us made us feel terribly sick and ill; and, worse than all, we began to fear we had missed the cave and were now below its level.

"We must have sent up thousands of dollars' worth of gold for those brutes to make belts and necklaces of.

"On the ninth day things was getting desperate; the Injuns told us they had got no gold from the stuff in the basket for the last twenty or thirty heaves, and as they supposed the rich pocket was now worked out, they began to prepare for a big feast to celebrate our sacrifice.

"All this time we had been working in the dark,

and the terror of torture and death, the horrible food and incessant work, added to the darkness, had reduced us to a deplorable condition. Poor Jim was often delirious, and I feared he would go raving mad.

"Somehow I never quite despaired, though I felt very ill and my body was covered with sores.

"I begged them to let us have a torch, so that we could see the colour of the earth, and try and find the lead we had missed.

"They, of course, wanted more gold if they could get it, so threw us down a flaring pine knot, and we eagerly looked about us. On one side, about three feet from the bottom of the shaft, I saw the earth was of a grayish colour, similar to what we had found in the cave, so went to work in that direction, Jim holding the torch. Even by that dim light, I saw my pick strike something shiny, and when the bucket went up there were yells of delight from the Injuns.

"This was late in the evening, but they made us go on working hour after hour through the night, so long as we could keep on sending up such stuff.

"I don't know how many hours we had been hard at it, taking it by turns, when my pick struck a chunk of gold as big as my fist, and this, with several other smaller ones surrounding it, we stuffed into our pockets, quickly filling up the basket with the first stuff we could lay hands on.

"Nothing could stop my work now; I was stiff, sore, and tired, but I felt I was near the cave, and at last, when I drove the pick home with all my force, a mass of earth fell around us and disclosed an open space. Jim couldn't keep quiet; he lost his head completely, and started yelling like a maniac; so I knocked out the light, and told him I would kill him with the pick-axe if he didn't shut up. Then the Injuns shouted from above, to know what was up, and I said I had accidentally struck Jim's eye with the pick, and that he had dropped the light. They only laughed, and said that would leave but one of Jim's eyes for them to have the pleasure of burning out, but they said I must be careful of both mine, so as not to rob them of their fun.

"They said they had no more torches handy, so chucked us down a haunch of roast venison, and told us to eat, sleep, and grow strong for to-morrow's work.

"Jim was now quite sobered. We quickly tore the good food to pieces, and ate like wolves the first cooked meat we had seen for many days. After about half-an-hour's anxious listening, we could hear no more sounds from the Indian camp, so let ourselves through the new opening as carefully as possible. It was pitch-dark, but we recognised the passage at the end of the cave, and crawled cautiously out to the blessed fresh air.

"It was terrible work scrambling down the steep cliff, for the steps were few and far between, and not easy to manage even in daylight. At last, however, we reached the cañon alive, and without broken limbs, though a good deal torn and bleeding. We did not expect pursuit until the morning, but a man feels very helpless without a gun or a horse.

'If only we could get down the cañon and find our hobbled mules; but there seemed scarcely any chance of that in such inky darkness, even if the Injuns had not long ago found them and driven them off.

IV.

'At last we got to the mouth of the cañon, and were surprised to find how light the night was in the open country. There were bright stars, and now the moon burst through the clouds.

'We walked silently about, peering eagerly at every half-seen object, but could find no trace of the mules.

'We had half made up our minds to start eastward on foot, though we felt the chances of them blamed Injuns following our tracks, and overtaking us before we could be twenty miles away, were a thousand to one.

'"Listen!" said Jim; "I believe I heard a horse nickering."

'I thought it was his fancy, but we pushed eagerly in the direction he said the sound came from, and had not walked six hundred yards, when we came in sight of a herd of forty or fifty horses, mules, and donkeys grazing quietly in the moonlight, and a short distance off were the three Injuns, who were, I suppose, in charge of them, sitting round a fire dozing or talking.

'Well, you know, boys, it ain't easy to sneak up to a herd of horses in the dark, and the more sly and silent you are, the more likely they are to stampede; but the slightest noise would, of course, make the Injuns look round.

'Three of the horses was staked out, and luckily they were nearer to us than to the fellows in charge, and we had got quite close up to them, when one snorted, and away went the whole bunch as hard as they could go. It was lucky them three was fastened with good strong ropes, for, as you know, a frightened horse would run to the end of his rope, and pretty nearly throw himself down, no matter how gentle he might be. The Injuns rushed towards us like lightning, and we had only just time to cut all three ropes, jump on the backs of the two best-looking nags, and dash away. A couple of arrows whistled by our heads, but we fled like the wind, and in a few seconds were well out of their range.

'We paid no attention to the direction we were taking, but, naturally enough, our horses followed the stampeded bunch, and soon overtook them.

'Jim was pretty crazy a few hours before, but he was surely smart enough now. "Steve," said he, "if we take the whole blessed herd with us, them rascals will be afoot, and can't follow very quick, and maybe we can sell the plugs for a few dollars, if ever we reach Chihuahua."

'So we drove the whole lot as hard as we could gallop, straight east, for we could now see the first sign of coming daylight.

'I don't think I ever saw two better ponies than the ones we were riding. I've often wondered about it since, for Injuns generally use the most played-out, sore-backed plugs they have for night-herding their saddle stock on; but I suppose these two must have been recently stolen from some ranch, for they were evidently corn-fed ponies, and the Apaches would know well enough they would be hard to keep from straying back if not kept tied up close.

'We did not slack our pace at all till we had placed a good dozen miles between the gentlemen we had been lately working for and ourselves; but we felt pretty safe now, and just jogged along steady-like all day.

'Well, boys, to make a long story short, we never saw any more of the Injuns at close quarters, though we caught sight of a lot of them once far behind us, crossing a big alkali flat, and probably riding a few donkeys and old plugs, which we had found too lazy or weak to keep up, and had allowed to drop behind before we had run many miles.

'On the second evening we reached a Mexican ranch, put the bunch into the pen, caught up a fresh saddle-horse each, and swapped a couple of mules for two saddles, for we were feeling sore, and I never did like riding bare-back for choice.

'We ate everything the greasers could put before us, and after resting a few hours, continued to push on towards Chihuahua, which we reached without no more trouble after another three days' riding.

'I've sometimes seen fellows look pretty tolerable tough after a hard trail drive, but I never saw any such sorry sight as Jim. I was almost ashamed to go into Chihuahua with him, but he told me I looked worse.

'Our hair was long and matted with blood and dirt; we had each about three inches of dirty-looking beard and whiskers.

'Our faces was black as niggers; we were both just simply skin and bones; and the rags we had on us were simply indecent.

'I never did enjoy a wash, shave, and change like that time.

'We sold all the horses except the two which saved our lives; got five hundred good Mexican dollars for the chunks of gold we had saved, and dressed ourselves up like blooming Mexican Dons. I got drunk too, boys; but perhaps I needn't have told you that, because you all know well enough old Steve Jackson could have made his pile a dozen times over if he hadn't been so cussed fond of rye-whisky.

'I only met Jim once since. He was "tending bar" in a saloon at El Paso, and ain't no better off than the rest of us.'

A NEW DEPARTURE IN WINE PRODUCTION.

By G. C. FRANKLAND.

SOME two years ago a certain Dr Sauer made the astonishing announcement that he had been able, by means of a method which he had discovered, to obtain a yield of alcohol from a fermenting solution amounting to between sixteen and seventeen per cent. Now, as hitherto the highest yield which had been procured only reached some thirteen per cent., great curiosity was not unnaturally exhibited in this discovery, whilst not a little scepticism was expressed as to its reliability.

The difficulty of raising the percentage of alcohol seemed insurmountable, for the simple reason that when the quantity of this ingredient

present exceeded the customary thirteen per cent. or so, the producer of the alcohol—that is, the living yeast cells—could not maintain their existence, and consequently the whole process was brought to a standstill.

How, then, had Dr Sauer been able to overcome or circumvent this apparent inherent prejudice of the all-important fermenting organism to an excessive amount of alcohol in its surroundings?

As is well known, this idiosyncrasy of yeast cells has necessitated the so-called 'fortifying' of wines, like sherries, with alcohol from other sources, to supply the deficiency in the amount present after the completion of the ordinary process of fermentation.

Dr Sauer's device is as simple as it is ingenious. He takes a twenty per cent. solution of must, and sterilises it—that is, banishes all traces of bacterial life by heat; he then warms it to about 122 degrees Fahrenheit, and sows it with lactic acid bacteria. The introduction of these lactic bacteria is the key to the whole process. When these microbes have well established themselves, and have produced a certain quantity of lactic acid, their activity is brought to a close by the whole solution being heated to 158 degrees Fahrenheit; after this has been done, it is rapidly cooled down to a temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit. The must is now ready to receive the fermenting yeast cells, and in this condition affords a most excellent medium for their growth and multiplication. The particular variety of yeast with which it is sown depends upon the special taste and bouquet which the wine is required to possess, and the yeasts derived from the surface of some kinds of Spanish grapes are very frequently selected for this purpose. Very soon after the addition of the yeast, the fermentation starts with great energy, and as soon as signs of its slackening are visible, fresh quantities of sterilised must are added, whilst the supply of sugar is maintained by the addition of small quantities of raw sugar from time to time. This process is repeated as long as the yeast cells exhibit signs of activity, and the result is this unusually large yield of alcohol from the must.

But what, it may be asked, have the lactic acid bacteria had to do in the matter; how has their presence in the must been able to stimulate the activity of the yeast cells in this remarkable manner, resulting in such a large increase in the alcohol elaborated?

It would appear that the function of these bacteria is the removal of the tartaric acid which is, of course, always present in the grape-must, the lactic acid being produced at the expense of this material, for no tartaric acid is present in the must after the lactic bacteria have finished their work.

Therefore, whereas the yeast cells will not tolerate more than about thirteen per cent. of alcohol in their surroundings when it is coupled with the presence of tartaric acid, they gladly go on working in a much more saturated alcohol-environment when this ingredient is replaced by lactic acid. It is not that the yeast cells come, as it were, personally in contact with either of these acids, for they do not touch them; but in some mysterious way, not yet fully understood, these materials exercise respectively a constraining

and expanding influence upon them, which profoundly affects their physiological functions.

Dr Sauer's experiments have been repeated and confirmed by many distinguished investigators, and it is universally acknowledged that he has made a most important discovery, which is likely to prove of immense service to wine-producers.

There cannot be a doubt that nothing but approval can be meted out to a method which enables the alcohol required to be produced *in situ*, as it were, and obviates the necessity of furnishing the deficiency from extraneous sources; whilst the replacement of the familiar tartaric acid by lactic acid has not in any way affected either the flavour or dietetic value of the wine.

LOOKING FOR A FACE.

SHE said, 'I am resign'd,' and tried to strengthen

Her trembling features with a stricken smile;

'And when these cold winds pass the days will
lengthen;

I shall be braver in a little while.'

So, soon the fallen work was reinspected,

Small children's frocks, and socks of every day;

The trifling task, the duty long neglected,

Was taken up, and done, and put away.

But when each market eve drew near its resting,

She wander'd, desolate, into the town,

Where laden fathers laugh'd, with children jesting,

The great tears rose again, and trickled down.

Sometimes a voice, with something of the sweetness

Of his dear tones, would vibrate through the heat;

Ofttimes a step, with something of the fleetness

Of his dear feet, would echo in the street!

And at the step or tone, the little city,

The flare of lamps, the light jest, and the feud

Died out for her! the stars grew dim with pity,

In silence trod the phantom multitude.

But, with her fingers clench'd and pulses burning,

She pass'd along in agonised despair,

The soul within her eyes alive with yearning,

To see again a face that was not there!

Each cottage room seem'd to be waiting daily

His sure approach; and when the sun was kind,

When in the lanes the bonnie birds sang gaily,

She watch'd to see his shadow pass the blind.

Within the garden wayside weeds assembl'd,

The lace-like chickweed wove its tender track;

And, looking out, the mother's white lips trembled—

'There would be much to do if he came back.'

Her children grew, in virtue and in gladness,

To be her blessings and enrich her days;

No shadows fell on them from her still sadness,

Kind words and actions glorified their ways.

But, while her soul grew greater for the giving,

Through sacrifice and gain, through flame and frost,

Through each long hour of every day of living,

Its hunger strengthen'd for the love it lost!

EDITH RUTTER.

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NATURAL HISTORY AS A VOCATION.

By Sir WILLIAM H. FLOWER, K.C.B., F.R.S.,
Director of the Natural History Branch of the British
Museum.

It is a strange and interesting fact in human nature, that among thousands of boys who do not take the slightest interest in anything pertaining to what is commonly called 'Natural History,' there are here and there, at all events among all cultivated nations, some few to whom it is an absorbing passion, affording more delight than anything else in life. Very often this is only a passing phase, affecting boys chiefly between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, and then entirely dying away, but with some it persists through life, materially modifying the whole course of existence. This curious condition of mind, or 'idiosyncrasy' as physicians call it, is not confined to particular races or nations; the Japanese have it as well as Europeans and Americans. Nor is it limited to any particular position in the social or educational scale. No one could have had it in a more intense form than the poor Scotch shoemaker, Thomas Edward, child of some of the humblest people of the land, whose biography by Samuel Smiles I presume all readers of this magazine are acquainted with. On the other hand, there have been few keener naturalists and collectors than the late Crown Prince Rudolf of Austria, and in England at the present time few, if any, can yield in this respect to the heir of the wealthy house of Rothschild, the owner of the finest private zoological museum in the world.

One great peculiarity of this condition of mind is that, though it does occasionally run in families, more often it arises as it were spontaneously in one member of a family, without any inherited predisposition or any external circumstance, as far as is known, leading to it. Indeed, it is often most strongly developed when the circumstances seem most adverse, and where no encouragement whatever has been given to pursue it. I am especially in a position to become

acquainted with all the symptoms of what I may call this affection, as from my official position fathers and mothers of boys attacked by it continually consult me as to how the inclination or passion for natural history should be treated in view of the future career of the boy—whether it should be peremptorily suppressed, or whether and in what direction it should be developed, and above all, what are the prospects of its leading to obtaining a livelihood. Having a strong sympathy with boys of such tastes, I have generally availed myself of the opportunity of a little talk with them, and have given them such advice as seemed best in the particular case. As to natural history as the regular occupation of one who has no other means of living, I have little to say that is favourable, as it is about the worst paid and least appreciated of all professions. The only thing that I can say for it is that the prospects are brightening, surely if slowly, both in Europe and America. It is, I firmly believe, a profession of the future. The only way to judge of what is coming is to look back at the past, and note the changes that have been recently and are still taking place. The opportunities for pursuing natural history with some sort of remuneration, small as they are, are undoubtedly greater now than they were twenty or thirty years ago.

With the general spread of education, lectureships, demonstratorships, and curatorships are every year becoming more numerous, and there is no reason to suppose that this excellent state of things will not continue. But still, before advising any one to take up natural history as a profession, I must be convinced of his really intense and abiding interest in the subject, and of his zeal and determination to pursue it at whatever sacrifice of ease or comfort, his readiness 'to scorn delights and live laborious days' in fact. Some boys seem to be so devoted to it as to be incapable of applying themselves to anything else. If this is really the case, I generally advise parents to let them go on if possible, giving them the best education in the subject that is available, and letting them take their chance of obtaining an appoint-

ment when they are fit for one. The difficulty with such cases is that to pursue natural history with any chance of profit in these days a considerable knowledge of other subjects, especially modern languages, is absolutely indispensable. The continually-increasing amount of scientific literature which must be taken account of in every branch of natural history has much changed the condition of study required for it, as has also the growing tendency to give appointments solely on the results of competitive examination. In no case would I discourage the taste altogether, but I more often advise some other means of making a living, holding on to natural history as a recreation and relaxation. To a soldier or sailor, for instance, a love of natural history is the greatest possible blessing, and still more to the man of independent fortune. They are often saved by it from all kinds of evil which want of wholesome occupation engenders. Their life becomes a continuous delight, instead of being a burden to themselves and others. Even to those mainly engaged in the most absorbing money-making pursuits, the refreshment of an occasional excursion into the realms of nature need not be insisted on. It is perfectly obvious to all who have ever had an opportunity of observing it.

With an early love of natural history is almost always associated a love of collecting, and probably there is no better way of becoming familiar with a subject than by making a collection of objects illustrating it. The value of all knowledge depends a great deal upon the amount of labour and time spent in acquiring it. The easy methods of which we make too much boast in the present day, hand-books, pictures, lectures, well-arranged public museums, &c., have their drawbacks and snares as well as their advantages. They are all helps if properly used, but they will not supersede, and nothing will ever supersede the downright hard personal work by which all solid, lasting knowledge must be gained. The value of making a collection of any kind of specimens about which you wish to know something is that you are forced to spend time and thought over them, to look at them carefully, to prepare them and compare them, to arrange and name them. In proportion as a collection has had all this done to it will be its value. That a museum depends for its utility, not upon its contents, but upon the mode of arrangement of its contents, is now a trite saying. An ill-arranged museum has been well compared to the letters of the alphabet tossed about indiscriminately, meaning nothing; a well-arranged one to the same letters placed in such orderly sequence as to produce words of counsel and instruction. Far more, however, than the intrinsic value of the collection, in the case of the beginner, is its value as a means of education to the owner. The arrangement of a collection not only teaches the nature and properties of the objects contained in it; it also stimulates a desire to know more of the similar objects not contained in it, but to be found in other and larger collections. Still more important than this, as an educator, it calls out many valuable practical qualities: originality, order, neatness, perseverance, taste, power of discriminating small differences and resemblances, all of which will be found useful in other spheres of life.

It matters less what are the contents of a museum than that there should be some definite object in bringing them together. To be a mere 'snapper-up of unconsidered trifles' is not forming a museum. The subject chosen to be illustrated by the specimens collected should not be of indefinite extent, but have some natural limit. This alone will enable the collector to attain to the highest goal in the happiness of his occupation: the filling in of all the vacant spaces when the framework of his collection is completed. The richer a series is, the greater joy there is in adding to it what still remains wanting. Limits to collections of natural history objects are of two kinds. Either a particular natural group of animals or plants may be selected, as shells, butterflies, mosses, seaweeds, &c., or any subdivision of these great groups; or else the products of particular localities, preferably of course that in which the collector lives, may only be regarded. A combination of these two methods of limitation will generally lead to the most manageable and profitable amateur museum. Suppose, for instance, our young friend were to set himself the task of collecting and preserving all the fossils, or all the land and freshwater shells, or all the birds' eggs, or the beetles, to be found within a radius, say, of ten miles round his dwelling-place, what a fund of knowledge he would acquire, not only of the appearance of the individual specimens, but of their natural surroundings and habits! And what delightful rambles he would have in the open air, with eyes and ears intently appreciative of all the varied beauties of the lovely world in which we dwell, lost, unfortunately, to so many who pass through it with none of these interests and pleasures!

Although a collection with a definite object, of specimens obtained, prepared, and arranged by one's self is the ideal of a boy's museum, I do not say that the possession of a few miscellaneous articles, which are sure to be given by kind friends as soon as the taste for possessing them is recognised, may not sometimes be an advantage, especially as a help in stimulating inquiry and knowledge. My first 'museum' was, as I recollect, very much of this nature. It was contained in a large, flat, shallow box with a lid, and I made cardboard trays which filled and fitted the bottom of the box, and kept the various specimens separate. Everything was carefully labelled, and there was also a manuscript catalogue in a copybook. No boy should ever be allowed to keep any sort of museum without a catalogue in which the history of every specimen and the date at which it came into his possession are carefully entered. When the box was outgrown it was superseded by a small cabinet with drawers, then by a cupboard; but before I had left the parental home for college, an entire small room was dignified by the name of my 'museum.' It was the love of curatorship which thus grew up within me, without the remotest external influence or inherited predisposition towards it, as none of my relatives had any interest in such pursuits, that determined my after career, and led to such success as I have met with in it. My boyish fondness for dissecting animals and preparing their skeletons at that time could find no nearer outlet in any academic career than in the pursuits of a medical student; and the anatomical museum

of my college was at first to me a much greater subject of interest than the wards of the hospital—so much so in fact, that while still in my second year of studentship the curatorship falling vacant, I was asked to undertake the office. Here I was in my glory, and although later on the more practical work of the surgical profession had its attractions also, attractions which at one time nearly carried me off into the stream of London hospital practice, I finally returned to the old love, and through a succession of fortunate incidents, the museum under my care, instead of the one little box with which I began, is now the largest, most complete and magnificently housed in the world.

I need hardly say that in all my subsequent career I have always looked back at my early attempts at curatorial work with especial satisfaction. The educational power of all work done when young can never be overestimated. The sooner knowledge is acquired the more valuable it is. You have it so much longer and it becomes so much more a part of yourself. One of the first specimens I possessed was a little stuffed bird with a brown back and white underneath, and a very short tail. I saw it in the window of a pawnbroker's shop in my native town, Stratford-on-Avon. I often passed the shop, and looked at it with wonder and admiration. At last I summoned up courage to ask its price. 'Three pence,' was the answer. This was a serious consideration; but the financial difficulty being overcome, I carried the bird home in triumph. Having access to a copy of Bewick's *British Birds*, I identified it as the dipper or water ouzel, and even learnt its scientific name, *Cinclus aquaticus*. It was wretchedly stuffed. Though more than fifty years have passed since I saw it last, for during an absence at school, it, with many other treasures, fell into places where 'moth and rust do corrupt,' its appearance is still fixed in my mind's eye, with its hollow back and crooked legs sticking out of impossible parts of its body; but I was not then so critical as I have since become. My only reason for mentioning it is because that bird became part of my permanent stock of ornithological knowledge, and ever since, whether by a mountain stream in the Highlands of Scotland or a rocky river in the Harz or Thuringian Forests in Germany, when I see a dipper flitting over the rushing water or diving beneath the surface, it seems an old familiar friend of my childhood.

Another specimen of which I have a very vivid recollection was labelled in the handwriting of the kind donor 'Bone from Kirkdale Cave, Yorkshire.' It was given to me by an old gentleman who lived in the neighbourhood, and whose large collection of geological specimens was a great delight to me to look over. It was a perfectly valueless fragment from a scientific point of view, not having characters enough to identify the animal to which it belonged, being little more in fact than a chip from the surface of a long bone, of which thousands were found in the cave. But it woke up a train of interest in me, leading to the whole subject of caves and their bygone inhabitants, and the reading of Buckland's *Reliquiæ Diluvianæ*; while ever since Kirkdale Cave has stood out among all other caves with a sort of romantic halo conferred upon it in my mind by

the present of that fragment of bone with all its early associations. These are only two instances out of any number I could tell of the ways in which a boy's museum may become a source of knowledge and of interest that may last through life.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER XVI.—'LOVE THE GIFT.'

HER answer was altogether astonishing; she leaned back in the boat and looked him full in the face. A quick flush tinged her own, and the incomparable eyebrows were raised and arched; but underneath there was an honest tenderness which Olivia was not the girl to conceal.

'Was that your water-lilies?' said she; but this was not the astonishing speech. He had lured her afloat on impudently false pretences; she had a right to twit him with that.

'There are no water-lilies,' he confessed; 'at least, never mind them if there are. Oh, I was obliged to make some excuse! There was nowhere else where we could talk so well. I tell you again, I have the check to love you! I can't help it; I've loved you ever since that day in London, and you've got to know it for good or bad. If it makes you very angry I'll row you back this minute.' He was resting on his oars under cover of the little island; the Towers were out of sight.

'Why in the world didn't you speak yesterday?' was Olivia's extraordinary reply.

'Yesterday?' faltered Jack.

'It was a chance!'

'Not for me! My tongue was tied. Olivia, I was under a frightful cloud yesterday! You don't understand!'

'What if I do? What if I did at the time?'

'I don't see how you could,' said Jack.

'Instinctively,' replied Olivia, to screen her mother, 'I knew something was wrong; and, I have since been told what. If only you had spoken then!'

She dropped her eyes swiftly; the tear ran down her cheek.

'But why? Why then, better than now?'

'Because I care too,' she whispered, so that the words just travelled to his ear.

'Olivia! My—do you know what you've said? Do you mean it?'

'Of course I care. I mean that much. You are different from everybody else.'

'Then—'

'There must be no "then."'

'But you said you cared. Tell me—I don't understand.'

'I can never marry you,' said Olivia, looking him once more in the face. And her eyes were dry.

'Why not, if it is true—that you care?'

'Because you are what you are—and I—oh! how can I say it even to you? I am so ashamed. I have been thrown at your head from the very first—no, I have no right to say that. How I hate everything I say! You must understand; I am sure you do. Well, in the beginning I couldn't bear to speak to you, because I knew—'

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what was hoped—and I seemed to see and hear it in every look and word. It hurt me more than I ever can tell you. The same sort of thing had happened before, but I had never minded it then. I suppose all mothers are like that; it's natural enough, when you come to think, and I'm sure I never resented it before. I wouldn't have minded it in your case either; I wouldn't have minded anything if I hadn't'—

The words would not come.

'Haden't what?' he said.

'If I hadn't liked you—off my own bat!'

'But if you really do, my glorious girl, surely that fixes it? We have nothing to do with anybody else. What does it matter how they take it?

'It matters to my pride.'

'I don't see where your pride comes in.'

'Of course you don't; you are not behind the scenes. And I can't make you see; I'm not going to give my own people away to that extent, not even to you. But—I can just picture my mother's face if we went in this very minute and told her we were engaged! She would fall upon both our necks!'

'That wouldn't matter,' said Jack stolidly. 'That would be all right.'

'It would be dreadful—dreadful. I couldn't bear it when I know that yesterday'—

She checked herself firmly.

'Well, what of yesterday?'

'It would have been quite a different thing.'

'What! if I'd spoken then?'

'I—think so.'

'You would have said'—

'I should have found out what your trouble was. You would have told me everything. And then—and then'—

He leaned still farther forward.

'If you had wanted me very much'—

'I do want you very much.'

'I should have found it easier to say "yes"—the word was hardly audible—'than I ever shall now!'

'But why, Olivia? Tell me why!'

'You force it from me, word by word,' complained the girl.

'Then let me see. I think I begin to see. You like me in myself almost well enough to marry me. Well, thank God for that much! But you don't want to marry the Duke of St Osmund's because you're mortally afraid of what people will say. You think they'll say you're doing it for the main chance. And so they will—and so they may! They wouldn't say it, and you wouldn't think it, of any other man in my position. No, it's because I'm not fit for my billet; that's how it is! Not fit for it, and not fit for you; so they'd naturally think you were marrying me for what I'd got, and that you couldn't bear. Ah yes, I see hard enough; it's as plain as a pikestaff now!'

The girl saw too; with the unconscious bluntness of a singularly direct nature, he had stripped her scruples bare, and their littleness horrified Olivia. The moral cowardice of her hesitation came home to her with an insupportable pang, and her mind was made up before his last sentences put her face in flames.

'You are wrong; she could only murmur; 'oh, you are dreadfully wrong!'

'I am right,' he answered bitterly, 'and *you* are right. No wonder you dread the hard things that would be said of you! For take away the name and the money, and what am I? A back-block larrikin—a common stockman!'

'The man for me,' said Olivia hoarsely.

'Ah yes, if I were not such a public match!'

'Whatever you are—whatever you may be—if you want me still'—

'Want you! I have wanted you from the first; I shall want you till the last!'

Her reply was indistinct; her tears were falling fast; he took her two white hands, but even then he did not touch with his lips. A great silence held them both, and all the world; the island willows kissed the stream; in the sheet of gold beyond a fish leaped, and the ripple reached the boat in one long thin fold. The girl spoke first.

'We need not be in a hurry to tell everybody,' she began; but the words were retracted in the same breath. 'What am I saying? Of course we will tell. Oh, what a contempt you must have for me!'

'I love you,' he answered simply. 'I am too happy to live. It is all too good to be true. Me of all men—the old bushman!'

She looked lovingly on his bearded and sunburnt face, shining as she had never seen it shine before.

'No; it's the other way about,' she said. 'I am not half good enough for you—you who were so brave yesterday in your trouble—who have been so simple always in your prosperity. It was enough to turn any one's head; but you—ah! I don't only love you; I admire you, dear. May God help me to make you happy!'

They stayed much longer on the lake, finally disembarking on its uttermost shore, because Olivia was curious to see how the hut would look in the first rosy light of her incredible happiness. And when they came to it the sunlight glinted on the new iron roofing; the lime-trees exhaled their resin in the noonday heat following the midnight rain; and the shadows were shot with golden shafts, where all was golden to the lovers' eyes.

Jack made a diffident swain; it was the girl who slipped her hand into his.

'You will never pull it down?' she said. 'We will use it for a summer-house, and to remind you of your old life. And one day you will take me out to the Riverina, and show me the hut you really lived in, and all your old haunts. Oh, I shouldn't mind if we had both to go out there for good! A hut would take far less looking after than the Towers, and I should have you much more to myself. What fun it would be!'

Jack thought this a pretty speech, but the girl herself was made presently aware of its insincerity. They had retraced their steps; and there in front of them, cool and gray in the mellow August sunshine, with every buttress thrown up by its shadow, and the very spires perfectly reflected in the sleeping lake, stood the stately home which would be theirs for ever. Olivia saw it with a decidedly new thrill. She was looking on her future home, and yet her husband would be this simple fellow! Wealth could not cloy, nor grandeur overpower, with such a mate; that was perhaps the substance of

her thought. It simplified itself next moment. What had she done to deserve such happiness? What could she ever do? And a possible tabernacle in the bush entered into neither question, nor engaged her fancy any more.

A COCOA-NUT PLANTATION IN MOSQUITO.

By ROWLAND W. CATER.

IN the summer of '93 I arrived at the mouth of the Wawa River, on the Mosquito Coast of Nicaragua, from the interior, whence I had journeyed in the hope of catching a trading schooner that would convey me and the jungle produce I had accumulated to Bluefields. But on the Caribbean Sea punctuality is almost as rare a virtue as in the cities of Granada, Leon, and Managua. The vessel, I learned, was sure to be a fortnight behind time, and would probably not arrive for a month. That being so, I resolved to visit the Wounta Cocoa-nut Plantation, owned by an old acquaintance, Mr Gustav A. Schultz.

To reach the mouth of the Wounta, or Kukulaya River, which is some twenty miles south of the Wawa, I had choice of two routes. I might put to sea in a cockleshell, provided that I could induce a crew of Indians to run the risk; or I might tramp along the heavy beach with pretty frequent detours into the forest to avoid the worst bits of—I cannot call it road. As I had been journeying in the woods for many weeks with rubber-gatherers, mahogany-cutters, and heron-hunters, a voyage, if short, by sea seemed a very desirable change, and I resolved to hire a boat.

Much gesticulation and a little Spanish enabled me to make the natives at the mouth of the Wawa comprehend my requirements; and my belongings and I were soon on board the stoutest dug-out the community possessed. Most of the able-bodied villagers came to see us off, and showed their interest in various ways. This was not surprising, for the two bold fellows who for a few dollars had pledged themselves to take me to Wounta might never return. It was just a toss up, as I presently became convinced.

Mosquito Indians are the best canoe-men in the world, the most skilful and the bravest, and they had need be. We put to sea in a craft about eighteen feet long, cut out of a cedar trunk, and hollowed with fire and adzes. When the two natives, myself, and my luggage were aboard, the gunwale showed only a few inches above the water.

I had supposed that we should hug the shore as closely as possible, but the Indians had no such intention. Paddling with a will, they urged the dugout straight for the bar, where the strong current of the river meets the inflowing tide, and great rollers hurl themselves upon the sand-bank, which, silted down from the interior, is for ever growing at the mouths of most of the rivers on this coast, until in course of time each so-called harbour becomes a lagoon, and another bar is formed farther out at sea.

As we drew near the curling foam-tipped waves, mounting high above our heads, the Indians plied their paddles at a great speed.

In an instant, almost, we were amongst them. A monster struck us fair. The rickety craft, half full of water, trembled from stem to stern, and for the space of a second recoiled from the blow. That was a perilous moment. But in like hazards, often dared, the natives of the Mosquito shore long since won their reputation. My bold fellows uttered one tremendous yell, then, by sheer strength of muscle, they lifted the boat out of the trough. Snatching a jicara gourd, I baled in desperate haste, for the water reached almost to my waist as I sat. The Indian at the prow looked round and laughed—at my ghastly face, doubtless. The danger was over.

'Well done!' I cried, in English. 'You shall have an extra dollar each for that.'

Both laughed then. English might be an unknown tongue, but 'dollar' needed no interpreter.

As soon as the water had been got rid of, we hoisted a very primitive sail, and turned the stem of the dug-out southwards. Then we 'ripped,' as boatmen say. Now between two walls of green water, with only a strip of sky visible, now on the crest of a roller, we skimmed along, until, without further peril, we at length rode abreast of the Wounta.

There we had to negotiate another bar, but this time the great waves, shoreward bound, travelled with us. A hundred yards or more away from the broken water the dug-out began to tremble so violently that I felt compelled to cling to the gunwale on either hand, but I was soon glad to let go and grip the thwart. A score at least of black sharks were racing us with the evident purpose of being on the spot should we chance to capsize. Every now and then one would dive beneath our craft, and my sensations when, as occasionally happened, the hungry brute struck the keel in rising, were anything but agreeable. One, indeed, rose so close that, fearing he was about to attempt to snatch a meal out of the boat, I drew my revolver quickly and pulled the trigger. But the cartridge was damp, as may be supposed.

Meanwhile, my daring Mosquitos were racing the waves. One sat in the stern, steering-paddle in hand, the other near the prow. From time to time the steersman glanced over his shoulder. If a big wave were approaching, both rested on their paddles until it had almost overtaken us, when, with a shout, the two commenced paddling as hard as they could, striving to keep pace with the breaker, on whose crest we were thus enabled to mount safely. So, urged by sail, paddle, and rollers, we glided over the bar into smooth water, whither the sharks evidently did not think it worth while to follow. Two hours later I reached Wounta Plantation, where the warmth of Mr Schultz's greeting made amends for the perils of the journey.

Although the Mosquito Coast is practically fringed with cocoa-nut palms, Wounta Plantation is the only one of any importance where *Cocos nucifera* is systematically cultivated—so far as I am aware. It comprises about 2560 acres, held under a fifty years' lease at the ridiculous annual rental of three cents, native currency, or about three farthings per acre. At that period (1893) some 20,000 palms had been planted. Of these about 8000 were bearing fruit, and of the remain-

ing 12,000 trees many, doubtless, are now bearing, and others will shortly begin to bear, so that each year the output is increased. Every year, also, a large number of nuts were taken from the 'nursery' and planted out, for at that time something like three square miles of the estate were still uncultivated—in short, there was room for 100,000 more palms.

Visitors to tropical countries soon learn to look upon the cocoa-nut palm much as we do on the oak or elm. It is in almost every landscape near the sea. But no person who has once surveyed an evenly-planted grove of them will deny the beauty of the spectacle. At Wounta they stand in serried ranks, straight as an arrow, and one may gaze up their avenues until the converging lines on either side meet and fade in the distance.

As regards the method of cultivation, I cannot do better than quote from a letter written by Mr Schultz, in July of last year, wherein he explains that the 'cocoa-nut-walk' has been 'a second-hand investment' to fill up his leisure time, and that it has been much neglected.

'The palm,' he writes, 'requires the sea air, or better, the sea spray. The most suitable soil for its cultivation is coral sand intermixed with earth. The nuts should not be planted less than thirty feet apart, as the roots extend quite that distance, forming a complete network. When commencing a cocoa-nut plantation, the first thing that must be done is to accumulate a quantity of sound nuts in the husk, or coir, and place them close together in rows, to form a "nursery." At intervals, forked uprights, three feet high, should be fixed in the ground, and slender poles stretched across to support a light roof of palm or other leaves. If watered once a week in dry weather, all the nuts should sprout in the course of two months.

'When the "nursery" has been prepared, the next thing is to clear the land. The trees and brushwood must be cut down and burned after lying a month to dry, when the ground is ready. Two-thirds only of each mother-nut should be covered with soil, and the sprouts should be turned towards that quarter whence come the most wind and moisture. At the expiration of a year the soil, for the space of ten feet round each nut, should be thoroughly cleaned and loosened with a hoe. This is most essential. The more attention given to the young palms, the quicker they will grow and bear. Close to my house, where the palms could scarcely escape being attended to, I had them in blossom in the third year.

'It is unnecessary to gather the nuts, unless they are wanted for drinking purposes when half matured, as when ripe they drop to the ground. On good land, if planted and kept clean as previously described, the grower may safely calculate upon an annual crop of at least a hundred nuts from each tree, and as they drop continually throughout the year, it is an unceasing income. The fibre, or coir, also may be turned to account, though I allowed it to rot. In addition to the cocoa-nuts, the ground may be planted with cotton, pea-nuts, castor-oil beans, &c., during the first two or three years, and the produce of these will help to pay expenses without injuring the palms in any way.'

Mr Schultz, who has been succeeded in the

management of the plantation by his son, and is not now residing in Nicaragua, concludes his letter by remarking in connection with the unsatisfactory settlement of certain claims on the Nicaraguan government, relating to gold-mines: 'I wish I had been English born. England would have settled my matter long ago; but Germany, on account of the Nicaragua petty trade, places justice aside.' This is rather interesting in the light of recent events.

To return to the cocoa-nuts, I am able to supplement Mr Schultz's information. The palms will bear nuts in the fourth year if they are kept very clean and the soil is constantly loosened; but if they are badly cultivated, ten years may elapse. The sea air is essential. Indeed, *Cocos nucifera* will not grow beyond a certain distance from the sea.

In addition to the roof of leaves, it is desirable to cover the nuts in the 'nursery' with sand and seaweed to the depth of an inch; and I think they should be watered daily in the dry season until they germinate. In two to three months after laying down, a white shoot will spring from one of the three depressions at the base of the nut, and a thin root from each of the others. The latter penetrate the ground; and soon after they become firmly attached, the fibrous husk of the nut splits and falls off. Nuts sown in April may be planted out in September, but during the first year they should be carefully protected from the direct rays of the sun and the attacks of rats, wild pigs, and cattle. Given an abundance of water, genial moist breezes, and a sandy soil, palm trees have been known to yield, on an average, half a ton of nuts year after year. Every few weeks during the rainy season they flower, so that ripe fruit and newly-opened blossoms may often be seen upon the same tree. The flowers form in clusters round the top of the stem, within a large sheath which splits, withers, and falls off when the bloom is fully developed.

Now for the financial aspect. Good land on the Mosquito shore may be purchased at 5s. an acre, or leased, as we have seen, at three farthings per acre upwards. For fifty cents, native currency, or 1s. per annum, land sufficient to support one palm may be obtained and prepared, and the tree planted and kept clean until it arrives at a bearing age. This should happen not later than the fifth year, by which time each palm will have cost 5s. Nuts are sold by the thousand; each thousand will require ten trees, costing £2, 10s., or, including harvesting, £2, 12s. 6d., to produce. Add the freight to London, £2 per thousand nuts, and the total net capital expenditure will be £4, 12s. 6d. The average selling price of nuts in London is £4 per thousand, to which must be added 6s. 4d., the net value of the coir, bringing the total proceeds to £4, 6s. 4d., or eighty-eight per cent. for the five years on a net capital expenditure of £4, 12s. 6d.

It must be borne in mind that the above figures relate to the first bearing year and the four preceding years only. The cost of cultivation, &c., for the second bearing year and each year after will of course be only one-fifth of the sum expended during the first five years. In short, the joint proceeds of the first and second years' crops will liquidate the net capital invested, and leave a surplus of about 10s. on each ten trees,

which, in the third bearing year, the capital having all been paid back, so to say, will amount, roughly, to £1, 12s. Increase the number of trees to 100,000, and the planter's gross annual income will be £16,000, plus the original capital, refunded.

The cocoa-nut grower is not obliged to export his nuts. He may ship his produce in the form of oil, of which forty nuts will yield a gallon. This is largely used in the manufacture of soap, candles, &c., and for the hair. Or he may make it into butter. A writer in the *Jewish Chronicle* recently described a new 'Kosher' product called 'Nucoline,' which is cocoa-nut butter, pure and simple. Its introduction into Europe has hitherto been prevented by reason of its so quickly becoming rancid. This difficulty, however, has, it is declared, been overcome by a patented process of refining which removes the characteristic odour and taste of the nut oil, and transforms it into a really palatable fat or butter of such stability that it remains odourless and sweet for many months. It is said that butter made from ripe cocoa-nuts more closely resembles that from cows' milk than any other fat, its chemical constituents being almost identical.

The planter may also profitably employ his produce in feeding cattle. Even trees which chance to be blown down may be turned to account. The timber, which is known as 'Porcupine Wood,' is often used in shipbuilding, cabinet work, for farm implements, &c.

Nor need the cocoa-nut grower on the Mosquito Coast confine himself to *Cocos nucifera*. In addition to the cotton, pea-nuts, and castor-oil plants mentioned by Mr Schultz, hardy fibrous grasses, such as Ranie and Henequen (Sisal Hemp), may be grown between the palms; as also may bananas, plantains, fig-trees, mangoes, and various other fruits. Mr Schultz, indeed, devoted more attention to gold-mining and the india-rubber trade than to his cocoa-nuts.

Attached to Wounta Plantation there is a large ranch which in March '95, the date of my last visit, comprised from three to four hundred head of cattle. There is also at Mr Schultz's house a store which is constantly visited by rubber-gatherers (*huleros*) and miners, who there exchange gold and forest produce for merchandise from Europe or the United States.

Before choosing land for a plantation, the means of conveying the nuts to a market must be considered. As there is no harbour at Wounta, when Mr Schultz had a cargo ready he was obliged to send a messenger to the nearest port with a request for the next steamer or schooner to anchor out at sea in front of his estate. The cargo was then put aboard from his own specially constructed surf-boats, of which he owned quite a little fleet.

But even with this drawback, the plantation at Wounta is very favourably situated in comparison with many in the East; and the cocoa-nut palm on the Mosquito Coast is wonderfully free from animal and insect pests. In Ceylon, for instance, various beetles, of which *Batocera rubus* is the chief offender, penetrate the trunk and deposit their eggs. The grubs hatch and work their way upwards until they reach the young buds, which they promptly devour, often killing the tree. The palm-squirrel (*Sciurus palmarum*) is another

nuisance unknown in Mosquito. This lively little fellow pierces the depressions in the base of young nuts and feasts on the milk. Then there are several species of birds which build above and around the flower sheath, and delight to pick off the newly opened blossoms. Last, though not least, there is the well-known East Indian crab (*Birgus latro*), which is said to crawl up the stem and pinch the fruit-stalks until the unripe nuts drop to the ground, when, descending, it tears off the fibre covering the eye-holes, allows the milk to exude, and feeds off the fleshy pulp within. A plantation on the Mosquito Coast, however, is happily free from all of these.

For sport-loving Englishmen there is a great inducement to settle in this part of Nicaragua. At Wounta, deer, pumas, jaguars, and wild pigs were frequent visitors in '93, as also in '95, and it is unlikely that they have all been exterminated.

I was sitting on the veranda with Mr Schultz one evening, when Benancio, his assistant and general overseer, came running up.

'At the corral, señor,' he cried, 'the cattle are stampeding! It is a *tigre*!'

My host snatched up his rifle and gave me another. Next moment we were hastening after Benancio in the direction of the corral, a large space, generally bare, surrounded by a high railing, where the cattle are driven for the night. This stands on the shore of a lagoon about three hundred yards from the house.

Pausing, Benancio, a pure-blooded Indian, active as a deer, allowed us to catch him up. The horses were snorting and galloping madly round; the horned cattle bellowed and moaned in extremity of terror—proof enough that either a jaguar or a puma had gained access to the corral. Shouting to calm the horses and cattle, we climbed the high rails and made for a shed within the enclosure. There was no moon, and only a few stars were visible.

'Look out!' cried the cocoa-nut planter as we approached the hut, looming dimly through the mist. Next instant his rifle cracked. 'Shoot, Benancio!' he thundered. The head *mozo*, a dead shot, and born woodsman and hunter, sprang forward. His rifle spoke, and down from the roof of the building tumbled a full-grown jaguar, or *tigre*, as the natives call this powerful, savage brute. Shot through the spine and shoulder, it lay writhing in the dust until Benancio put an end to its struggles with a bullet through the brain.

Until the *mozo* fired his first shot—I had not been able to distinguish the jaguar, but Mr Schultz said it was just about to spring down upon him when Benancio's bullet through the spine paralysed it.

After we had soothed the cattle—no easy task—Mr Schultz and I returned to the bungalow. Benancio waited for the moonlight to enable him to skin the *tigre* without spoiling the pelt.

My host informed me that although jaguars and pumas frequently visited the plantation, this was the first that had entered the corral to his knowledge during the many years that he had dwelt there.

In the course of my various visits to Wounta Plantation I accompanied Mr Schultz and Benancio on several hunting expeditions, and I

found life at the bungalow so pleasant that I was always very sorry when a steamer or schooner bound for Bluefields or Greytown signalled us from the offing, and I had to depart.

THE BELEAGUERED LADY.

CHAPTER III.

FOR a space I lay still in the water, wondering what I should do, and expecting every moment to have the man challenge me and fire. Then, when he did not stir, I moved forward as quietly as possible and laid hold of the weedy rock.

It was too dark, despite the stars, to see very clearly, but I perceived that the man was a sentry of the Parliamentary forces. I wondered why he did not move or give some other sign of having perceived me. Suddenly the thing was explained, for the figure gave a clumsy lurch forward, and the man uttered an exclamation that showed he had been sleeping.

I ducked my head until it was half under water, my white face pressed against the slimy weed, and felt that my knife was where I might come at it easily. Then I resigned myself to wait until the sentry should move a little distance away, when I was resolved to make an effort to slip past him unperceived and get to the castle walls. But the water began to chill me so that I feared lest I should presently be altogether numbed and incapable of action. In the impatience thus engendered, I raised myself in the water and looked over the edge of the rock. A faint but quite unmistakable sound reached me. I knew that the sentry was sleeping once again.

This was no time for hesitation. I raised myself still farther, then leapt upon the rock and sprang at the man, possessing myself of his weapon in an instant. I withdrew a little and pointed it at him, and so we stood in silence for a moment. I had come half-naked out of the great sea, and that without a warning: the man, suddenly awakened from his sleep, was too frightened for words.

'Let me advise you to be silent,' I said. 'I must consider what I will do with you; but I am at least sure of one thing, that you will be wise in keeping silence.'

The man obeyed me readily enough, but for the life of me I could not see how my present situation was any better than that in which I had found myself before I left the water. He could do me no harm for the present, but as soon as I had left him he would assuredly give the alarm, and I could not take him with me into the castle.

Suddenly my anxiety grew more immediate; he had had time in which to fall asleep at his post. I knew that the discipline of the Parliamentary forces was most excellent, and guessed that he would not be left unvisited for many

minutes longer. I must take decisive action upon the instant.

'You have shown a pretty faculty of prompt obedience,' I said to the fellow. 'I now require you to strip, and that right quickly. Also, you may tell me the pass-word of the night.'

'But that means death to me,' said the man.

'Obedience means at least a chance of life,' I said. 'The other thing'—

Nothing else was needed. The man began to doff his clothes with hands that trembled in their haste. '*To-morrow* is the word,' he said.

'I shall presently shoot you,' I said, 'if it appears that you have lied.'

'I swear 'tis the plain truth,' he protested. '*To-morrow* is the word as it was given me to-night.'

'Make haste with your disrobing,' I said, keeping him still at the matchlock's end, and he obeyed me with such alacrity that he soon stood before me naked as he was born.

'Now,' I said, 'you will step into the water and conceal yourself where I lay hid until I was assured that you slept. Remember, too, that, though the game I am to play will bring me presently into a position of some danger, I shall shoot instantly if you make an effort to betray me.'

The fellow did as he was told, albeit after some protests, and I showed him how to keep in hiding. 'The position is one of little dignity,' I said, 'but you will find it safe so long as you are wise. Meanwhile, I will be dressing; the night grows chilly, and I have been long in the water.'

There was no time for carefulness. I placed my knife convenient to my hand, and bundled myself into the man's cast clothes without troubling to remove such as I had worn in the water. I confess I was choicely uncomfortable when my toilet was completed, but I was ready to come to the next scene of this adventure, for which I should have been singularly ill-prepared had I delayed a moment longer.

For I had but newly taken my matchlock and reminded the Puritan of the need of silence and invisibility, when I heard the sound of footsteps, and knew the captain was approaching.

'The word?' he said.

'To-morrow!' I answered, holding myself in readiness to fire on the man in the water at an instant's notice if he should have led me astray. There was no need of the precaution.

'Ten by the clock,' he answered, giving the countersign. 'Then keep a good watch,' he said, 'and give the alarm upon the slightest sign of an approach. They say the Royalists are advancing rapidly, and there is no telling when an attack may be made by sea or land.'

'Ay, sir,' I answered, watching him with a great air of relief as he retreated and was lost to sight. But the man in the water had still to be dealt with, and I could think of no method of disposing of him. It was he who suggested a way out of the difficulty.

'In half-an-hour they will come to relieve me,' he said softly, 'and it will be poor comfort to you to kill me if you die yourself a moment after.'

'That is astonishingly true,' I said; 'but it would seem to be the fate that is before us.'

'If you would have some trust in my word,' he continued, 'I can see a way out of it. I did not betray you in the matter of the pass-word.'

'You offer a testimonial that is not altogether convincing,' I said. 'I would trust the Fiend himself so long as I had him naked, and in the water, within a yard or two of my gun's muzzle.'

'Listen to reason,' he said. 'If I am to save my life, I am bound to get away from here. There will be short shrift for me if it is told how you have outwitted me. Now, I am sick of this work, being something of a coward from birth. I would give the world to be away before the Royalists come and we are shut in between two forces.'

'And so you propose——?' I queried.

'I am a swimmer myself,' he said, 'and I would suggest that you should take my word for it that I will swim away from the island and strike the coast to the east of Marazion, and so go up the county into my own country. At least you will have a chance of accomplishing your desire—of entering the castle, I presume—without let or hindrance from me.'

Time pressed. At least I should have some minutes in which to effect my entrance, and if the alarm should be raised before I had done so, I might still, with good luck, make my escape by water.

'Go,' I said, 'without delay. I shall watch so long as I am able, and I am an excellent shot at short distances.'

The man slipped away from the rock and swam swiftly seawards. I watched him for a while. Then a sudden fit of impatience took hold upon me. I flung the matchlock into the sea, and climbed the steep ascent to the castle as swiftly as might be.

The man in the water had kept his word, and there came no sound to betray me; but the need of haste was still imperative. Yet I had come on this mad errand relying absolutely upon the assistance of Rose Mundy, and if she should fail me, I might yet be lost. I came beneath the window which had been hers, and began to whistle very softly the air of an old west country song that was dear to both of us.

My sweetheart, come away.
Can't you hear the glad song,
The glad song of the sweet nightingale?

I came to the end of a verse, and had produced no effect. I began the air again, but stopped suddenly when I heard a faint sound of the opening of a window. Silence followed. I began again.

'Dick!' cried a voice that would call me back to life again though I had been dead a long lifetime.'

'Hist!' I cried. 'I could not keep away, and so I am come back. In five minutes the alarm will be given, and I may be lost. Speak to those at the gate, and tell them how it is. You know my voice. Tell them that you know it is I, for I am he who waited for Rose Mundy one day in spring at the broken cromlech.'

'Dear heart,' she cried, 'the voice was enough.' Then she disappeared, and I moved gingerly under the castle walls towards the part at which

I was to enter. Suddenly I broke into a run. There was a great disturbance below me: the guard had come and found the sentry absent. The alarm had been raised.

IN A SUNNY ISLAND.

By ALAN WALTERS,
Author of *A Lotos-eater in Capri*, &c.

THE physical beauties of Sicily, often called 'The Queen of the Mediterranean,' are not less varied than the historic associations connected with her past. In shape an irregular triangle—whence her ancient name of Trinacria—the island covers an area of some 11,000 square miles, the greater part of which is broken cultivated ground, along which run several mountain chains culminating eastward in the superb mass of Etna.

There is scarcely a rood of Sicilian soil that is not rich in memories of valorous deeds, and with which the destinies of the mightiest nations of the old world are not closely interwoven. Again and again have the streets of her cities, her hill-sides, her streams and harbours, been dyed with the blood of victors and vanquished. The Gulf of Milazzo, on the north coast, was the scene of three of the bloodiest naval battles of ancient times; under the shadow of the castled crag of baleful Scylla calamity fell upon the war-ships of Richard the Lion-hearted; within gunshot of Taormina the gallant De Ruyter received his death-wound; beneath the walls of wonderful Girgenti the brave knights of Malta encountered death and defeat at the hands of their foes.

From a commercial point of view also, Sicily possesses no little interest, and would, if better governed, undoubtedly yield imposing revenues to the illustrious but poverty-stricken kingdom of which she forms a part. As it is, want, misery, and dangerous discontent are in pitiful evidence on every side. The most important natural product (next to corn) has from very early times been sulphur, a commodity now decreasing in value owing to the vigorous competition of the cheaper and better made stuff from the mines of Japan. The richest Sicilian sulphur-mines are at Lercara (easily reached from Palermo by rail) and at Villarosa, half-way between Girgenti and Catania. Fifty years ago the export reached 350,000 tons annually; now it does not touch a third of that quantity. It is probable that the trade will still further decline, unless modern scientific methods of separating the ore are allowed to supersede the clumsy old-fashioned ones still in use. The same may be said also of rock-salt, which is very inadequately worked, but should be an important item in the mineral wealth of the island. Among metals are found, though to no great extent, silver, lead, antimony, copper, and iron. Anthracite and petroleum also exist; the latter having in bygone times been so extensively used as to acquire the name of Sicilian oil. Alum too is found, but in far less quantities than in the neighbouring Lipari Isles. Pliny tells us of Sicilian emeralds (probably jaspers); and at the present day cornelians and agates are not uncommon, the latter so called from the small river Achates in the south. To these we must add alabaster, amber, cinnamon, and emery; while a certain mysterious substance

known as *polvere di Baida* (from a village near Palermo) enjoyed for many centuries a high reputation, and was sold to the ignorant as 'the elixir of life.'

In the matter of climate Sicily stands well-nigh supreme. With a personal experience of many climes, we do not hesitate to aver that this favoured 'island of the sun' enjoys, taken all the year round, as delightful weather as is anywhere to be found. Without the oppressive heat and languor of the tropics, the damp of Madeira, or the excessive dryness of Egypt, the climate (at least at Palermo) surpasses, in our opinion, that of any other health station in the world. The mean temperature in August is but seventy-eight degrees Fahrenheit—less than Florence—and in January but fifty-two, showing a range of only twenty-six degrees, figures that it would be difficult to improve upon. The only drawbacks are occasional blasts of sirocco (not unhealthy, and usually but for a few hours, during which one hundred degrees in the shade may be registered) and a little too much wind on the eastern coast. At Palermo the rainfall is twenty-two inches, and at Syracuse sixteen inches, December (three inches) being the wettest, and July (one-sixth) the driest. The island lies within 'the zone of winter rains, and hazy unsettled weather sets in usually after the autumnal equinox. But the last two months of the year are delightful, although from the likelihood of settled weather later on we advise intending visitors to give the preference to March and April.

Sicilian scenery is diversified and in many places extremely impressive. Westwards of Etna lies a desolate tract of gray and black ashens lava tufted with heath, which, near Nelson's Bronte, gives place to vineyards and forests of ivy-covered oaks and chestnuts. Farther inland the roads are often flanked by wide breadths of willowy corn-land, with here and there an antediluvian-looking brown-tiled village, embedded amid vines and olives and oranges. Along the southern coast vast sand-dunes at the edge of the sea are backed by miles of palmetto and asphodel, the land having for centuries lain uncultivated through constant terror of unmanly visitors from the opposite African coast. It is in the northern districts that the most characteristic and beautiful scenery is to be met with. Here the eye revels in a constant change and contrast of blue water and white rock, of stony *fiumara* beds and wooded glens, of vineyards and lemons, tall aloe and sombre cypress and gaudy oleander, opalescent fountains and hurrying torrents, the 'many-twinkling smile of ocean,' and far away the motionless majesty of snow-crowned Etna.

It is impossible to give the reader any just idea of the various beauty spots on the island. We can but sketch in bare outline one or two of the more notable pictures, beginning with the one that lies before our eyes as we pen these lines in a sun-lit garden on a height behind Syracuse. Around us stretch huge masses of limestone, in the clefts of which spring myrtle and cythus and wild hyacinth, with whose fragrance the breeze comes laden from over yonder shining sea. In the foreground lies all that is left of 'quadruplicates Syracuse'—the 'couch of Artemis,' as Pindar calls it—now shrunken to its original site on the island of Ortygia, carrying our thoughts back

less to her days of opulent splendour, when her walls were fourteen miles in circuit, than to her later times of terrible fatality, and to that supreme day, the very turning-point of her prosperity, when 'all Sicily was conquered in Syracuse,' and the tearful eyes of Marcellus gazed upon the prize at last within his grasp.

At Palermo *la felice* a yet fairer scene meets our eyes. The hills that stand on three sides round the venerable Phœnician city trend, with delicately broken outlines, towards the Tyrrhenian Sea, tinted with such loveliness of aerial hue, that at early dawn or at the hour of midnight, beneath the beams of a full moon, the panorama resembles some fleeting fabric of the fancy that 'must fade e'en as we gaze.' Within her 'shell of gold,' close to the margin of the tideless sea, lies couched the loveliest of Ocean's Nereids, the grand old city *non Sicilia modo sed Italice totius pulcherrima*, still rich in memorials of Arabian and Saracen, her masters from Rome and Athens and Carthage, barbarian Ostrogoth, the masterful sons of the Norman Tancred, the hated Angevine. On the north-west rise precipitously the red crags of Monte Pellegrino, called by Goethe 'the most beautiful promontory in the world.' Nor is such praise extravagant, whether we consider its outline, or the superb view from its summit, whence the eye ranges over a long stretch of broken island shore. Forty miles away gleams the little sea-girt rock of Ustica, or 'Bone Island,' so called from the ruthless starvation there of six thousand soldiers, abandoned by the Carthaginians to the horrors of famine. At our feet spreads the city with its noble cathedral, handiwork of our English Walter of the Mill, its exquisite Cappella Palatina, or royal chapel, its wealth of memories, its host of regal and princely tombs, its flower-decked gardens fanned by the balmy of zephyrs. Behind stretches away to the encircling hills the rich *Conca d'Oro*, or 'shell of gold,' an undulating sea of unbroken verdure, reaching right up to the grim old gateway in the city wall. It was on that green plain that Hasdrubal met the legions of Rome in a battle which gave to the Metelli right to imprint an elephant on their family coins. Where now a quiet cemetery fills the site of an ancient church by the Oretò stream were enacted the horrors of the Sicilian Vespers. Here, on this rocky stronghold upon which we stand, Hannibal Barca for three years set at defiance all the efforts of his Roman foes; and yonder telegraph beacon crowning the topmost ledge was built to the order of England's greatest sea captain.

Very different is the scene that captivates us amid the time-worn ruins of Doric Selinunto, as we stand near the temple of Apollo, among what the country folk call *I Pili dei Giganti*. The 'palmy Selinus,' of which Virgil wrote, has long ago vanished. Human malevolence has combined with the forces of nature, and made her 'one of the most gigantic and sublime ruins imaginable.' If Monte Pellegrino should be climbed on a bright spring morning, Selinunto should be visited as the day draws to its close, when the stars begin to show themselves over the northern mountains, and the limestone rocks gleam pearly gray, and a soft mist is coming up from the marshes, and the African sea is lazily

lapping on the long dunes of sand. Or, if we seek a contrast to the 'white spectre of Selinus rising amid the waste,' we find it amid the rocky fastnesses in which, a score of miles to the north, Segesta had her yet more ancient dwelling; where, through a space in the savage hills, the eye catches a glimpse on the one hand of a vast, unfinished, yellow-hued temple, reared, as they tell you, by the men of Troy, and on the other, of a grim, mediæval fortress, round which cluster the squalid poverty-stricken houses of Calatafini.

Rich in beauty, yet of another kind, is the view over the straits of Messina from the mountains of Neptune. Truth to say, the city itself—*portus et porta Siciliæ* as Charles of Anjou called it—would be but a dull collection of featureless houses if it were not for the exquisite glints of blue sea and white sails, and the background of rosy mountains. Messina, we must confess it, is a place of painful disillusionment for the lover of *Much Ado about Nothing*, in whose streets you cannot, in this present year of grace, imagine yourself coming across Benedick, or Claudio, or Don Pedro. In the foreground lie miles of arbutus, and tree-heath, and thyme, wherein wild bees hold ceaseless murmuring revel. Far away on our left-hand gleam the fiery Lipari Islands, with the puny terrors of Scylla and Charybdis nearer at hand lying asleep in the sun. In front the brilliant blue of heaven is cut sharply by the fantastic outlines of pine-clad Aspromonte, at whose feet soars in mimic rivalry the little castle of drowsy Reggio. Beneath us is the beautiful hapless city on her sickle-shaped shore washed by the narrow 'ocean river,' through which aforetime came bold colonists of Greece on their way to Cumæ, and Alcibiades strong to plead his country's cause in yonder ruined market-place. Across that strait with longing eyes looked forth storm-vexed Alaric, and would fain have landed on its hither shore in that last enterprise, before the waters of Busento closed for ever his restless schemes of conquest. Down there by yonder little fort of San Salvatore, Norman Roger, 'the Great Count,' won a crown, and Richard of England did penance for presumption, hearkening to the wild dreams of Abbot Joachim, and thence setting sail for Cyprus and the Holy Sepulchre. Here, two centuries afterwards, Charles of Anjou gnawed his sceptre with impotent rage, as he gave audience to the envoys of the Aragonese Peter; and in later days Don John embarked for Lepanto, and Nelson stepped on board the *Vanguard* bound for victory at the Nile.

And of wind-swept, rocky Taormina, sublimest of all these island scenes, what can be said that has not been said a hundred times? There, verily, all interests are blended, all beauties intermingled, historic associations, noblest decay, a wealth of half-tropical vegetation, and, to crown all, the gleaming ice-fields of the mighty lava-scarred mountain, the 'pillar of heaven,' lifting ever a delicate whiff of filmy smoke into a turquoise sky. The view from the loggia of San Pancrazio is one of which the eye can never grow weary, one of the great views of the world, like the Peak of Teneriffe or the city of Damascus, to be looked upon, not described.

Lastly, there is Girgenti, *la magnifica* as it is even now called, with its olive-clad hills and its magnifi-

cent ruins unsurpassed in any other land or clime. Temples, porticoes, columns, baths, and tombs lie scattered around in profuse, majestic ruin; most wonderful of all being the mouldering fane of Zeus, three hundred and sixty-three feet in length, with columns fifteen feet thick, and a moss-grown, colossal caryatid of marble lying supine in the midst, as of the disrowned god himself sleeping through the centuries, to be awakened neither by shock of earthquake, nor strife of elements, nor babblings from the lips of puny mortals.

Much could we write of the joys of dreamy spring days spent amid such old-world scenes as these. The longer one lingers, the harder is it to leave it all and to brace one's self anew for the roar and rattle of nineteenth century life. For the poet, the antiquary, the botanist, the student of history, or the mere 'roamer with a hungry heart,' Sicily stands, and must ever stand, alone and unapproachable among the islands of the earth. Yet must he who lands upon her shores be prepared to find her not all beautiful. 'Granary of Europe' though she once was, we ourselves, in our search for her hidden treasures of beauty, have been compelled not once nor twice to submit to intermittent severance *a mensâ et toro*, and to school the natural man to a deriding of eatable food and comfortable bed, while living laborious days of vagrant sight-seeing.

This sunny isle, but for the curse of man, would be to-day as of old, an 'Island of the Blest.' Although her natural beauties stand in painful contrast with her miserable social state, past memories with present realities, this does but serve to deepen her absorbing interest for all who have the wit and wisdom to read her story aright.

A BOWLER'S INNINGS.*

By E. W. HORNUNG, Author of *My Lord Duke*, &c.

I WAS in search of some quiet spot to work in over the Christmas holidays, and here under my handle-bars was the very place: a sheltered hollow with a solitary house set close beside the frozen road. Transversely ran a Yorkshire beck, overfed with snow, and on the opposite bank the pinched trees rose intricate and brittle and black against the setting sun. But what pleased me more was the blue signboard hanging immovable in the windless frost. And the yellow legend on the same, when I had back-pedalled down the hill, and was near enough to read it, was to yield the keenest joy of all:

BLUEBELL INN,
RICHARD UNTHANK.

Dick Unthank! The old Yorkshire bowler! The most popular player of his day! It must be the same; the name was uncommon; and was not inukeeping the last state of most professional cricketers? I had never spoken to Unthank in my life; but I had kept his analysis when a small enthusiast, and had seen him bowl so often that the red good-humoured face, with the crafty hook-nose and the ginger moustache, was a very present vision as I entered the inn, where I made

sure of finding it. A cold deserted passage led me to a taproom as empty and as cold. No sign of Dick could I discover; but in the taproom I was joined by a sour-looking slattern with a grimy baby in her arms.

'Mrs Unthank, I presume?'

'Yes, I'm Mrs Unthank,' said the woman, with a sigh which offended me. Her voice was as peevish as her face.

'Am I right in taking your husband to be the famous old cricketer, Dick Unthank?'

'I don't know, I'm sure; he's not that old.'

'But he *is* the cricketer?'

'Ay; he used to play.'

'Used to play!' I echoed with some warmth. 'Only for the County, and the Players, and England itself!'

'So I've heard tell,' returned Dick's wife indifferently: 'it was before my time, you see.'

'Is your husband at home?' cried I, out of patience with the woman.

'Ay; he's at home!' was the meaning reply.

'Busy?'

'I wish he was! No such luck; he's bad in bed.'

Dick Unthank ill in bed! I thought of that brick-red countenance and of the arm of gnarled oak which could bowl all day on a batsman's wicket, and I felt sure it could be nothing serious. Meanwhile I was looking at the woman, who was either entirely ignorant or else wilfully unappreciative of her husband's fame, and I also felt that the least indisposition would become aggravated in such hands. I said that I should like to see Mr Unthank, if I might, and if he would see me.

'Are you a friend of his?' inquired the wife.

'I have known him for years on the cricket-field.'

'Well, t' doctor said coompany was good for him; and dear knows I can't be with him all day, with his work to do as well as my own. If you step this way, I'll show you up. Mind your head as you come up-stairs. It's the ricketiest old house iver I was in, an' no good for trade an' all; but Mr Unthank took a fancy to it, and he wouldn't listen to me. I doubt he's sorry now. This is the room at t' top o' t' stairs. Oh no, he won't be asleep. Well, Unthank, here's a gentleman come to see you.'

We had entered a square, low room, with no carpet upon its lumpy floor, and very little furniture within its dingy walls. There was one window, whose diamond panes scored the wintry glow across and across, and this was what first caught my eye. Then it rested on the fire, in which the coal had been allowed to cake until it gave out as little warmth as light. The bed was in the darkest corner of the room. I could make out little more than a confused mass of bed-clothes, and, lying back upon the pillows, the head and shoulders of a man.

'He says he's known you for years,' added Mrs Unthank as I shut the door.

'Why, who can it be?' said a hollow voice from the corner. 'Poke up the fire, missus, an' let's see each other.'

'You won't know me, Mr Unthank,' I hastened to confess. 'I have only seen you play, but you have given me many a happy hour, and I wanted to tell you so when I saw your name on the sign-

board. I am only sorry to find you like this. Nothing very serious, I hope?'

'Not it!' was the hoarse reply. 'Tis nobbut a cold I caught last spring, an' never properly throwed off. It serves me right for giving up the game! I'd have sweaten it off in half-an-hour at the nets. But I mean to give *this* up, an' get a school or a club to coach next season; then I'll be myself again. That's better, missus! Now we can see to shake hands.'

And he gave me the cunning member which had been a county's strength; but the Dick Unthank of old days was dead to me before I felt its slack and humid clasp. The man on the fire-lit bed seemed half Dick's size, the lusty arms were gone to skin and bone, the weather-beaten face shone whiter than the unclean pillow which was its frame. The large nose was wasted and unduly prominent, and a red stubble covered the sunken cheeks and the chin. Only the moustache was ruddy and unchanged; and it glistened with a baleful dew.

I was utterly amazed and shocked. How I looked I do not know, but Mrs Unthank paused at the door before leaving us together.

'Ay,' said she, 'I thought you'd see a difference! He talks about playing next season, but he'll be lucky if he sees another. I doubt he isn't that long for this world!'

It was my first experience of the class which tells the truth to its sick and dying, and my blood was boiling; but Unthank smiled grimly as the door closed.

'Poor lass,' said he, 'it would be hard on her if there was owt in what she says! But trust a woman to see black, an' trust old Dick to put on flesh and muscle once he gets back into flannels. I never should ha' chucked it up; that's where I made the mistake. But spilt milk's spilt milk, and I'm right glad to see you, sir! So you've watched me bowl, have you? Not at my best, I'm afraid, sir, unless you're older than what I take you for!' And Dick looked sorry for himself for the first time.

'On the contrary,' said I, 'you never did much better than the very first time I saw you play.'

'When was that, sir?'

'Eighteen years ago last July.'

'Eighteen year? Why, you must have been a little lad, sir?'

'I was twelve; but I knew my *Lillywhite* off by heart, and all that season I cut the matches out of the newspapers and pasted them in a book. I have it still.'

'Mebbe it wasn't a first-class match you saw me come off in?'

'It was against the Gentlemen at Lord's.'

'Eighteen-year ago. Hold on, sir! Did I take some wickets in t' second innings?'

'Seven for forty-three.'

'An' make some runs an' all?'

'Thirty-two not-out. It was the fastest thing I ever saw!'

Dick shook his head.

'It wasn't good cricket, sir,' said he. 'But then I niver was owt of a bat. It was a bowler's innings was that—a short life but a merry one; 'twas a bowler's wicket an' all, I mind, an' I was in a hurry to make use of it. Ay, ay, I remember it now as if it was yesterday!'

'So do I: it was my first sight of Lord's.'

'Did you see the ball that took W. G. ?'

'I did. It nearly made me cry ! It was my first sight of W. G. also !'

'She came back nine inches,' said the old bowler in a solemn voice. 'Mr Grace he said eighteen inches, and the *Sportsman* it said six ; but it wasn't less than nine, as sure as I lie here. Ay, t' wicket might ha' been made for me that day ; there's no ground to bowl on like Lord's on the mend. I got Mr Lucas too—an' there wasn't a finer batsman living at the time—an' Mr Webbe was caught off me at cover. Them were the days, an' no mistake, an' yon day was one o' my very best ; it does me good to think about it. I may never play first-class cricket again, but mebbe I'll coach them as will !'

The fire had died down again, the wintry glow was blotted out by early night, and once more the old professional's face was invisible in the darkened room. I say 'old' because he had been very long before the public, but he was little worse than forty in mere years, and now in the dark it was difficult to believe that his cricket days were altogether over. His voice was fuller and heartier than when he greeted me, and if the belief that one will recover be half the battle against sickness, then Dick Unthank was already half-way to victory. But his gaunt face haunted me, and I was wondering whether such wasted limbs could ever fill out again, when there came a beating of hoofs like drumsticks on the frozen road, and wheels stopped beneath the window.

'That's the doctor,' grumbled Dick. 'I'm sure I don't know what he wants to come every day for ! Sit still, sir, sit still.'

'No ; I must go. But I shall want something to eat, and a bed for the night at least, and I shall come up later without fail.'

Already there were steps on the rickety stairs ; and I made my escape as Mrs Unthank, with a streaming candle, ushered in a tall old gentleman in a greatcoat and creaking boots. I was detaching my impedimenta from the bicycle when the creaking boots came down again.

'I should like one word with you, sir,' said the doctor. 'I gather that you are thinking of putting up here, and it will be a real charity if you do. You have done my patient more good in half-an-hour than I have in the last month !'

'Oh, as to that,' said I, 'it is a treat to me to meet an old cricketer like Dick Unthank, but I hardly think I can stay beyond to-morrow. I want a quiet place to do some work in, but I must be reasonably comfortable too ; and, to be frank, I doubt the comfort here.'

'You may well !' exclaimed the doctor, lowering his voice. 'That woman is enough to scare anybody ; yet for the money's sake she would look after you in a way, and with it she might make her husband more comfortable than he is. I may frighten you away myself by saying so, but it would be an untold relief to me to feel that there was one responsible and humane person in the house !'

'Is he then so very ill ?'

'So very ill ? Have you seen him and can you ask ? He is in a galloping consumption.'

'But he is so full of hope ; is there no hope for him ?'

'Not the shadow of a chance ! They are always sanguine. That is part of the disease.'

'And how long do you give him ?'

The doctor shrugged.

'It may be weeks, it may be days, it *might* be months,' said he. 'I can only say that in this weather and with such a nurse nothing would surprise me.'

'That is enough for me,' I replied. 'I shall give the place a trial.'

And I did.

Many nights I passed in a chamber as accessible to the four winds of heaven as to the companies of mice which broke each night's sleep into so many naps. Many days I lived well enough on new-laid eggs and Yorkshire ham, and wrought at my book until for good or ill the stack of paper lay complete upon the table. And many a winter's evening I spent at Dick's bedside, chatting with him, listening to him, hearing a score of anecdotes to one that I can set down here, and admiring more and more the cheeriness and the charity of the dying man. In all our talks I cannot remember an unkind story or a word of spite, though Dick had contemporaries still in the County ranks, the thought of whom must have filled his soul with envy. Even his wife was all that was good in his eyes ; in mine she was not actually bad, but merely useless, callous, and indifferent, from sheer want of intelligence and imagination.

In the early days I sent for my portmanteau and had my old cricket scrap-book put into it. Dick's eyes glistened as he took up leaf after leaf. I had torn them out for his convenience, and for days they kept him amused while I was absent at my work. Towards the end I brought my work beside him, for he was weakening visibly though unconsciously, and it was a new interest to his simple mind.

'I don't know how you do it, sir,' said he one afternoon as I gathered my papers together. 'I've been watching you this half-hour, your pen's hardly stopped—and it's all out of your own head ! It beats an' bowls me, sir, does that. Dear knows how you do it !'

'Well,' I laughed, 'and it's a puzzle to me how you pitch a ball just where you like and make it break either way at will. Dear knows how you do that !'

Dick shook his head.

'Sometimes you can't,' said he reflectively ; 'sometimes you're off the spot altogether. I've heard you say you can't write some days ; and some days a man can't bowl. Ay, you *could* write, and I *could* bowl, but they'd smack me to t' boundary over after over.'

'And what I wrote I should tear up next morning.'

He lay looking at the window. It was soft weather now, and a watery sun shone weakly into the room, slanting almost to the bed, so that a bleached and bony hand hung glistening in the rays. I knew that it was itching to hold a ball again—that Dick's spirit was in flannels—even before he continued :

'Now to-day's a day when you *could* bowl. I'm glad it isn't t' season : it'd be my day, would this, wi' a wet wicket drying from t' top. By gum, but you can do summat wi' a wicket like yon ! The ground fairly bites, an' the ball'll come in wi' your arm, or break back or hang,

just as it's told; it's the time a ball answers its helm, sir, is that! And it's a rum thing, but it'll drop where you ask it on a bowler's wicket; but on a good 'un it seems to know that they can make a half-volley of it 'most wherever it drops, so it loses heart and pitches all over the shop. Ay, there's a deal o' human natur in a treble-seam, sir; it don't like getting knocked about any more than we do.'

So we would chat by the hour together, and the present was our favourite tense, as though his cricket days were not nearly over. Nor did I see any sense or kindness in convincing him that they were, and a little persuasion brought Mrs Unthank to my way of thinking and acting in the matter. Clergymen, however, are bound by other considerations, and though Unthank was by no means an irreligious man, but had an open ear and mind for the manly young curate who came to see him from time to time, he did bitterly complain to me one evening when the curate was gone.

'No game's lost till it's won, sir, and t' parson has no right to shake his head till the Umpire gives me out. I don't say I'm in for a long score, bowlers very seldom are, but I isn't going out just yet a bit. I'll get better set by-and-by, and you'll see me trouble the scorers yet!'

It was easy to tell that Dick was proud of his metaphor, and it recurred continually in his talk. His disease was the bowler, and each fit of coughing 'a nasty one,' but if only he could keep up his wicket till summer-time he felt confident of adding some years to his score. This confidence clung to him almost to the last. He would give up the inn and get back to Brammall Lane, and umpire for 't'owd team' as long as he had a leg to stand on.

I remember when he realised the truth.

In a corner of the best parlour, beneath an accumulation of old newspapers and the ruins of a glass shade, I found one day, when I had finished but was still polishing my book, a worn cricket-ball with a tarnished silver plate let into the bruised leather. The inscription on the plate announced that this was the actual ball with which Richard Unthank had taken nine Nottingham wickets (the tenth being run out) for a matter of fifty runs, at Brammall Lane, in his palmy days. That was twenty years ago, but I knew from Dick that it remained the achievement of which he was proudest, and I took the ball up-stairs to him after cleaning the silver plate as well as I could with soap and water.

His hot eyes glistened.

'Why, wherever did you find this, sir?' he cried, with the joy of a child in his shallow voice. 'I'd forgot I had it. How canny it feels! Ay, ay, you was the happiest day in all my life!'

And rapidly and excitedly he gave me full particulars, explaining how and why the wicket had suited him to a nicety, and how he had known before he had finished an over that it was his day of days. Then he went through the Notts eleven, and told me with what ball and by what wile he had captured this wicket after that. Only one of the nine had fallen more by luck than good bowling; that was when Dick atoned for a half-volley by holding a terrific return, and so won the match for Yorkshire by the narrow margin of three runs.

'It was my slow ball, and a bit *too* slow, I doubt, an' he runs out of his ground an' lets drive. There was almighty crack, and next thing I hears is a rush of air low down to the on; I goes for it wi'out seeing a thing, feels a smack on my hand, an' there's the beautiful ball stuck in it that tight that nobbut gunpowder could ha' shifted her! She looked that sweet and peaceful sticking in my hand that what do you think I did? Took an' kissed her instead o' chuckin' her up! You see, sir, I'd forgot that if I'd lost her we should ha' lost t' match instead o' winning, for she was a dead-sure boundary; when owd Tom tell'd me it made me feel that bad, I'd got to have a big drink or faint; an' I feel bad when I think of it yet.'

In his excitement he had raised himself on his left elbow; the effort had relaxed his muscles, and the historic ball had slipped from his fingers and was rolling across the floor. I picked it up, and was about to return it to him, but Dick Unthank waved me back.

'Nay, nay!' said he. 'Give us a catch!'

So I tossed it gently into his outstretched hand, but the weak fingers closed too soon, and once more the ball rolled on the floor. Dick looked at me comically, yet with a spot of colour on either cheek-bone, as he shook his head.

'I doubt I'm out o' practice,' he said. 'Come, let's try again.'

'I wouldn't, Dick.'

'You wouldn't? What do you mean? Do you think I'm that bad I can't catch a cricket-ball, me that's played for All England in my day? Chuck her in again and I'll show you! Get to the other side o' the room!'

He was sitting bolt upright now, with both hands ready, and in his altered tone there was such umbrage that I could not cross him. So again I threw; but two such hands were no better than one; the ball fell through them into the bed; and Dick Unthank sat looking at me with death dawning in his eyes.

'It's the light,' I said gruffly, for it was the finest day of the New Year, and even now the sun was glinting on the silver-mounted ball. 'Who could make catches in a light like this?'

'No, sir,' whispered Dick, 'it's not the light. I see what it is. It's—it's what they call the beginning o' the end!'

And he burst into tears. Yet was he sanguine even then, for the end was very near. It came that night.

FROM AN OLD ORDER BOOK.

MILITARY ADMINISTRATION IN GIBRALTAR ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

FEW things tend more to convince one of the vast differences in the life and surroundings of the soldier of the present day, as compared with those of his comrade in arms of the last century, than a perusal of the records of a regiment of this period. In all corps and battalions, in every branch and department of the service, the records are carefully kept up by competent authority, and their preservation entrusted to a responsible officer. In much the same way as a captain in the navy keeps a log for his ship, the adjutant

of a battalion enters in a book, provided for the purpose, an accurate and detailed account of the daily occurrences affecting his brother officers and their men. The entries are chiefly devoted to those of the day's orders, as issued by the commanding officer; promotions and reductions, awards and punishments; proceedings of courts-martial; changes of station; and engagements and campaigns in which the battalion has taken part. As the records extend, in course of time, they form more or less comprehensive diaries, and, for purposes of subsequent reference, are, if carefully kept up, of great value to the military chronicler.

As a historian of that interesting and memorable era in the life of the British army, few have gone more closely into detail than has John Drinkwater in his *History of the Great Siege*. The volume, which contains to the civilian mind (which is not particularly interested in the intricacies of the purely military points in connection with the period) by far the most interesting and vivid account extant of the siege, is full of anecdotes. Many of them have, doubtless, been compiled from the official narrative of the event, and, among other curious items of information, we learn how, then as in these degenerate days, prophets are held in disrepute in their own country.

A soldier, so runs the story, feeling the gift of prophecy to have fallen upon him, was so bold as to announce that 'in the space of six weeks, and six days, and six hours,' the capture of the Rock was to be effected. The ruling powers in those days were, however, of an unsympathetic nature, and adopted a practical and unpleasantly effectual manner of testing the truth of these predictions. Accordingly, the governor directed that he should be kept in confinement until this period had expired. If by this time the prophecy had not been fulfilled, he was to be executed—presumably as a warning. Unfortunately his prognostication was not verified by subsequent events, and, as may be imagined, the fate of this ill-starred warrior was an untimely one. Ever afterwards prophets were at a discount in the garrison. He evidently lived before his time, as at the present day, by the employment of his peculiar talents, he would doubtless have derived a lucrative source of income from the receipt of the usual stamps, postal orders, or cheques, from the dupes who so eagerly patronise our nineteenth century tipsters and fortune-tellers.

It is Drinkwater, I think, who mentions what, considering the rude surgical appliances and rough-and-ready methods of their application at that day, must be considered as one of the most marvellous recoveries from serious injury on record. During the great siege a soldier received the following injuries from an exploded shell: a badly fractured head, one leg blown off, and an arm broken, his right hand shattered, and his whole body badly burned and contused. Notwithstanding these terrible injuries, it is alleged

that 'in eleven weeks his cure was completely effected.'

But it is from the old garrison orders, issued by His Excellency the Governor, and the records of the regiments then forming the garrison, that the most interesting particulars of this time are to be obtained.

That the customs prevailing among those who partook of their neighbour's hospitality were not always very different from those of our own time will be seen from this extract from General Orders, dated 1765: 'A hat having been taken from the convent* by some gentleman who left his own instead, Mr — takes this method that the gentleman may exchange hats, if he pleases.' There is a touch of naïveté about the phraseology here employed that is truly refreshing.

Later on we come across the following gentle intimation to gentlemen on the propriety of settling their just accounts: 'When the bounty money is paid, all good soldiers will take this opportunity of paying their debts; and it is recommended to all volunteers to apply at least half of their bounty money for that purpose.' A recommendation emanating from so august a personage as His Excellency would, I imagine, be regarded almost in the light of an order.

A suspicion that the sentences ordered by courts-martial were not always carried out in their entirety seems to have disturbed the serenity of the authorities. At least I consider that to this must be ascribed the necessity for the following direction:

'It having been brought to notice that the Provost Sergeant at the Moorish Castle does not inflict upon prisoners the whole of the punishment awarded, it is hereby ordered that in future, when any part of the punishment is not inflicted by him, he shall receive the remainder himself.'

The penalties inflicted at this time were, throughout the army, of what would now be considered the most barbarous description. Corporal punishment, as was the custom of those days, was awarded for comparatively trifling offences; and flogging parades were matters of daily occurrence. The order books of the day bristle with entries of such atrocities, and discipline on the Rock was enforced with ferocious severity. Here are a few instances, extracted at random:

'Private to receive 1000 lashes with a cat-of-nine-tails; the last fifty of which are to be given by the hands of the common hangman, between Southport and Waterport. The Governor orders this prisoner to be brought to the Grand Parade, there to receive as much of the above punishment as he is able to bear at one time, and the rest afterwards.'

Sentry-go is never a particularly pleasant duty, and especially uncongenial must it have been in those days when there was an order to the effect that, 'All sentinels who do not call out "All's well" every half-minute shall be punished with 200 lashes.'

Another entry is of a rather gruesome nature—'Privates A. B. and C. D. are to be executed to—'

* The official residence of the Governor.

morrow; and Private E. F., of the same regiment, is to receive 200 lashes under the gallows, as the above prisoners are hanging, of the 400 he is sentenced to receive.'

It is evident that at this time medical research by unqualified practitioners was not encouraged. For an offence of this nature a bombardier was sentenced to reduction to the ranks, and 'to receive 300 lashes with a cat with nine tails for playing the quack, and giving opium pills to a soldier, contrary to orders.' In this instance, however, it is stated that the court recommended him to mercy, 'on account of his long service of upwards of forty years.'

Then as now drink was a great factor in military crime, and, in connection with the offence of drunkenness, it was ordered that 'If any man is drunk when for exercise on the South Parade, he is not to be sent to the Black Hole, but marched a prisoner to the Parade.' To this was appended, as an afterthought presumably, the eminently suggestive intimation—'The Drum Major is to take the cat out for exercise.'

Notwithstanding the dead *fiat* of a court-martial, it was apparently occasionally possible to effect a compromise. This we are led to conclude from a memorandum from head-quarters in 1765—'The men under sentence of the General court-martial, having signified to the General that, if he could forgive the remainder of their punishment, they would fight like Devils, in the case of the place being attacked; he takes them at their word, and liberates them.'

Another method of commuting punishment was afforded by the opportune necessity for the construction of a road to the Signal Station. Remission of corporal punishment was granted at the rate of one hundred lashes to a day's work, &c. Thus literally by the price of blood was the construction of this road effected.

The instruction for the general bearing and deportment of the officers and soldiers quartered in the command were often rather peculiar. In the matter of saluting his superior, for instance, it was laid down that 'when passing an officer, a soldier is to put up his hand gracefully to his head, looking the officer respectfully in the face.' Nor was any infringement of the 'Regulation for Dress and Equipment' permitted. In respect of them the following remarks were published: 'The General, to his great surprise, met an officer coming from Spain with a large straw hat, and, to add to the burlesque figure, an officer riding behind him. The General forbids any such indecency, and will not allow Port liberty to any officer dressed in an unmilitary manner.' Another regulation indicates that umbrellas were not held in much favour. On pain of incurring divers penalties, officers and soldiers were strictly forbidden to carry them.

It seems that the system of interior economy then prevailing, and the methods in operation for securing the comfort of the soldier, were hardly in so advanced a state as they are now. Undoubtedly the garrison was a large one, and the barrack accommodation consequently somewhat limited, but still tents might have been made use of, rather than that they should have resorted to such a state of affairs as is implied

by this: 'For the convenience of quarters, the regiments of Pearce, Mark Kerr, Egerton, and Bisset, that are in barracks, to put three men in a bed, and as many beds in a room as possible to be removed this morning.'

The official performing the useful and often necessary functions of common hangman was not then held in more popular estimation than now falls to the lot of that individual. So greatly was he held in abhorrence by the garrison that the governor found it necessary to issue this despatch: 'Samuel Lewis being appointed executioner to the garrison, the Governor orders that no person whatever offer any abuse to the said Lewis: and whoever shall at any time abuse him, either by throwing stones, striking or upbraiding him, on account of the said employment, shall be punished with the utmost severity.'

Shortly afterwards he had occasion to make known his wishes again in these terms: 'Notwithstanding the Governor's late order against persons abusing the executioner, some soldiers and others have thrown stones at him, broke his head, and abused him in a gross manner. Whoever shall be found, &c., the Governor will order such person to be whipped severely by the said executioner.'

The conditions of a military career at this momentous epoch in our colonial history form a fascinating study. Unfortunately, space scarcely permits my dilating further on this subject. To those who wish for a closer and more intimate knowledge of the events occurring during this eventful period in Gibraltar's history, I would recommend a perusal of Drinkwater's work already mentioned, *The Diary of Captain John Spilsbury*, and the *Annual Gibraltar Directory*, which last contains an excellent history of the Rock, and many extracts from other volumes.

MENAM AND SPEY.

THROUGH the white sunlit air
The hot winds blow.

So cool and soft it was
A year ago!

A river now, as then;
Its waters flow
Yellow and thick—so clear
A year ago!

The far wide lands stretch on
Level and low.
The great hills closed around
A year ago!

Hills gray with changeful mists
Above the snow,
Purple where heather bloomed
A year ago!

Delight that's past makes pain?
To me not so!
The joy abideth of
A year ago!

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AS SEEN FROM TINTO.

ALTHOUGH not the highest eminence in the Upper Ward of Lanarkshire, Tinto is by far the best known, inasmuch as standing out boldly from all the others, it forms a prominent object seen from far and near. Distance, instead of diminishing its commanding proportions, rather bestows on them a charm of importance by permitting an uninterrupted view of the hill from base to summit towering upwards, and with graceful curves closing in the background of the landscape. Like other mountain masses, Tinto is the sporting-ground of the elements of sunshine and shadow, of rain and tempest, and is dependent on them for that variety of light and shade which lends an ever-changing freshness to its majestic form. At one time its summit is bathed in sunshine, at another enveloped in a veil of floating mist or buried beneath a dazzling shroud of the purest snow. But how serenely peaceful is the scene when the moon, rising from behind, casts a pale light over its crest; and how wildly grand and awe-inspiring when the pent-up thunder-cloud of the summer's day breaks at nightfall along its brow, and the forked flashes of lurid lightning quiver down its rugged sides, illuminating rock and precipice with a weird, unearthly radiance, amid thunderpeals reverberating from a hundred crags! How appropriate at such a time is the name, which is locally said to signify 'The Hill of Fire.'

Seldom has Tinto been so free from snow as during the winter of 1895-96. Early in October the first coating of snow fell, but this soon vanished, and was succeeded by others of almost as fleeting a duration. By the end of March little trace of winter remained, and with the advent of spring the hillsides began to put forth a greenness which contrasted well with the dull of the rocks and shingle. The bright clear weather at the beginning of May, and the warm colouring of the countryside, induced the writer, with a friend, to revisit the hill. Leaving the rich pasture-lands of Lochlyock, the pathway leads for a short

distance across the rough moorland. Ere the climb begins in earnest, the reservoir which supplies the town of Lanark is passed, and farther on the right are seen the butts of the Lanark militia.

Early as the season is, the day is oppressively warm and sultry, and nature around seems lulled to repose. Not a breath of wind shakes the pine wood underneath. The grouse take wing, uttering wearily a few querulous cries as if annoyed at being disturbed in their mid-day siesta. The shrill note of the whaup sounds dreamily from the marshlands by the reservoir, and the plaintive call of the ring-ousel is heard from the ravine on the right, both harmonising well with the subdued eerie cry of a hill-lamb, whose dam has wandered round the edge of a precipice to crop a tuft of sweet herbage. From the plantation below the cuckoo's note floats languidly upwards. Tinto is not the resort of many wild animals and birds. On its lower reaches there is no scarcity of hares and rabbits, of grouse and black game, plovers and pipits; peewits and swallows traverse it from base to summit; but there is a conspicuous absence of those creatures which are usually met with on a mountain so remote and unfrequented. No ravens and few birds of prey give a finishing touch to the wildness of the landscape by soaring or darting over the peak. Only one solitary sparrow-hawk was observed gliding past, and traces of a long unused fox's earth were seen on the descent. This rareness of 'vermin' may speak much for the skill and watchfulness of the gamekeeper, and the care spent in making the hill a sporting-preserve; but all lovers of wild nature who are not sportsmen may be permitted the sentimental grumble that it should be necessary thus to decimate the interesting fauna of our uplands and hills. Fluttering in the bright sunshine were many insects, busily enjoying their brief hour with unwonted vigour. Among these was the common Heath Moth (*Ematurga atomaria*), which was found even up to the wind-swept crest. So active was this species in its flight, and so well did its colours blend with the ground

when it alighted, that only one specimen was captured. When at length the ascent was completed, a large flock of swifts were noticed, describing graceful aerial evolutions around the summit.

As the traveller ascends, what a splendid picture is gradually unfolded before him! The hills, which hemmed in the area of vision, sink, and from behind them emerges the landscape, stretching out far beyond—field and wood, meadow and moss, farm and hamlet, village and town, spread out as a carpet, in which are curiously wrought many patterns of many colours, the predominating being a tender green.

Tinto bears, as its crown, an immense cairn of stones. Locally these are said to have been carried thither one by one, by pilgrims from time immemorial. Antiquaries, however, assert that on this cairn Druidical or beacon fires blazed in remote ages. The memorable fires which have been lighted upon it in the present century were on the occasion of the proclamation of peace at the close of the Napoleonic wars, of the first visit of the Queen to Scotland in 1841, and of her Jubilee in 1887. The cairn is doubtless of great age. It may be, who knows? a royal burial-place, and under its massive pile some ancient warrior chief, or the members of a dynasty, may rest like the Pharaohs within the Pyramids; and from this lofty watch-tower their warlike ghosts may look disdainfully down on the peaceful natives, who now wield the scythe and hoe in place of the flint-tipped arrow or battle-axe. History is silent as to what is within the cairn. All that is known is recorded in the following enigmatical rhyme:

On Tintock tap there is a mist,
And in the mist there is a kist,
And in the kist there is a caup,
And in the caup there is a drap;
Take up the caup, drink off the drap,
And set the caup on Tintock tap.

The view from Tinto is magnificent and perhaps unsurpassed. In the opinion of an old authority, there are few elevations from which a finer assemblage of the grand and beautiful in nature may be contemplated. The prospect is extensive, as part of sixteen different counties can be seen with the naked eye. 'The expanse of country,' says one, 'which it embraces appears unbounded on the west side, but towards the north it is terminated by the magnificent Ben Lomond and the lofty range of the highlands, crowding irregularly into view in a manner extremely picturesque. In the opposite direction of south-east, the prominent features of the view are the bold, undulating mountain lines, the finely grouped masses, and the ultimate swells and hollows of the Tweeddale hills. These magnificent objects, presenting themselves on the one hand, form an admirable and striking contrast to the delightful view on the other hand of the level country that stretches along the banks of the Clyde. This noble stream, which shows in its course so many charms of natural scenery, and whose fine sweeps through the mountain valley and lower reaches of Lanarkshire are so great an embellishment of the whole prospect, may in truth be said to carry along with it beauty and fertility from its very source. It is equally pleasing and unexpected to find at a height of six hundred feet

above the level of the sea a tract of land so rich in soil, as well cultivated, and so extensively clothed with plantations as the district spreading around the foot of the mountain, and up the river to a considerable distance.' The season of the year when atmospheric conditions are most favourable for an extensive view is autumn. Formerly, ere the use of the reaping machine became general, and the corn was cut by sickle or scythe, it was customary for the country people on 'Stookie' Sunday to climb Tinto to learn how far advanced were harvesting operations, or to enjoy the sight of fields waving with yellow grain or dotted with stooks. The writer has been told that at this season it is by no means uncommon to distinguish the sea on either side of Scotland—Goatfell and the Bass.

On the south-east, some ten miles distant, stands Coulter Fell about one hundred and twenty feet higher than Tinto:

The height between Tintock tap and Coulter Fell
Is just three quarters of an ell.

On the south is Dungavel, and beyond it in the distance rises Queensberry Hill. On the south-west are the hills of Crawfordjohn, where King James V., who often visited the Upper Ward to hunt the deer of its forests, and loved the retirement of Wandell Bower, built the Boghouse with the stones of Crawfordjohn Castle for the fair young Catherine Carmichael. Beyond these lies Leadhills, the birth-place of Allan Ramsay, a village on the Glegommer Water, twelve hundred feet above the sea-level, and long famous for its ancient mines of gold, silver, and lead.

Not only is the view as comprehensive as it is grand, but in the panorama spread out below there are spots possessing more than a local interest. The Tower of Lamington recalls memories of Wallace and Marion Braidfute, the heiress of Lamington, from both of whom the present lord holds to be descended. Easily distinguished are the sites of Bughall Castle near Biggar, the seat of the Flemings, Earls of Wigton; and on the north-west, above the Clyde, beyond Stonebyres Fall, of Craignethan, the 'Tillietudlem' of Sir Walter Scott; of Cowthally in Carnwath, the seat of the Somervilles; the ruins of Covington Castle, like that of Crawford, once a keep of the Lindesays 'light and gay'; and the farm of Covington Mill, where Donald Cargill the Covenanter was captured by Irvine of Bonshaw in the home of Andrew Fischer and his spouse Elizabeth Lindesay. Beyond the latter is the village of Covington, where Burns was honoured with an ovation and spent a jovial night when on his way to Edinburgh. To the west are seen the lakes in the grounds of Douglas Castle, 'Castle Dangerous,' the home of that fierce race, once hardly second in power to the Scottish monarchy. The eye looks down on Eastend House, nestling among its trees; while a little beyond to the north appears, on the southern slope of a hill, Carmichael House, the seat of the Earls of Hyndford, now the abode of their descendant, the present Convener of the County of Lanark. By Carmichael Church a road winds southward through the Howgatemouth, a pass in Tinto Range, along which, tradition relates, part of Prince Charles's army marched on its way to England; while beyond Lamington Tower are the hills among which were captured two hundred

Highlanders who in 1715 had taken up arms for the Stewarts. On approaching England they deserted their leader, Lord Winton, and turned homewards. There they surrendered to Clydesdale men, 'the hands of whom were shaking with fear.' After being cooped up for a day and a night in the parish church, they were marched to Lanark.

The cairn on Tinto commands a most extensive view of the Caledonian Railway system. The English express may be seen emerging from among the hills between Crawford and Abington. Speeding northwards it is lost to sight for a few minutes behind the Scout Hill as it passes Symington. Once it reappears, it remains in sight onwards to Carstairs Junction, where it is divided—one part for the Metropolis of the east, the other for that of the west; the former is seen till it crosses the horizon near Cobbinshaw, the latter till it is enveloped in the misty haze which hangs over the ironworks of Wishaw and Motherwell. From Symington the railway can be traced eastward beyond Biggar, where it winds round the outcrop hills of Tweedside.

Considering the now acknowledged medicinal and recuperative virtue of dry mountain air, the prophecy is not rash that, as our large cities increase and population becomes more and more congested, and business cares and worries wear out the energies, the mountains near our cities will be more utilised for purposes of health. May not some day, in the not distant future, a company be promoted to lay a railway to Tintock tap and build a sanatorium with the stones that form the cairn? In it the weary toiler or the jaded business man, taking a week-end holiday, would find rest, quiet, and the purest of bracing air, far from the din and bustle of the city strife, and have his eye refreshed and gladdened by looking down on the links and windings of flowing Clyde, with its peaceful, fertile laughs, and his ear soothed by the note of the plover or the bleat of the mountain sheep.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER XVII.—AN ANTI-TOXINE.

THEY rowed over, and were in mid-water when the landau drove up to the house. It had been sent in for Mr Dalrymple quite early in the morning. They saw nothing, however, until they landed, when the equipage was proceeding on its way to the stables, having deposited the guest. At this discovery Jack's excitement knew no bounds, so Olivia urged him to run on and leave her; and he took her advice, chiefly regretting that he had missed the proud moment of welcoming his old boss in the hall.

Jack regretted this the more when he reached the house. There was Dalrymple of Carara beginning his visit by roundly abusing the butler in the very portico! The guest was in a towering passion, the butler in a palsy of senile agitation; and between them on the step lay Dalrymple's Gladstone bag.

'What is the matter?' cried Jack, rushing up with a very blank face. 'Stebbing, what's this? What has he done, Mr Dalrymple?'

'Refused to take in my bag! Says no visitors are expected!'

'The deuce he does! The man must be drunk. Are you, Stebbings?'

The butler murmured an inarticulate reply.

'Get to your pantry, sir!' roared Jack. 'You shall hear more of this when you are sober. Old servant or new servant, out you clear!'

And he took up the bag himself, as Stebbings gave a glassy stare and staggered off without a word.

'I'm extremely sorry for losing my temper,' said Dalrymple, taking Jack's arm as they entered the house; 'but it always was rather short, as I fear I needn't remind *you*. Really, though, your disgraceful old retainer would have provoked a saint. Drunk as a fool in the middle of the day; drunk and insolent. Has the man been with you long?'

'Only fifty years or so with the family,' replied Jack savagely; 'but now he may roll up his swag!'

'Ah! I wouldn't be hasty,' said Dalrymple. 'One must make allowances for one's old retainers; they're a privileged class. How good of you, by the way, to send in for me in such style! It prepared me for much; but I am bound to say it didn't prepare me for all this. No, I never should have pictured you in such an absolute palace had I not seen it with my own eyes!'

And now the visitor was so plainly impressed by all he saw, that Jack readily forgave him the liberty he had taken in rating Stebbings on his own account. Still the incident rankled. Dalrymple was the one man in the world before whom the Duke of St Osmund's really did desire to play his new part creditably; and what could be said for a peer of the realm who kept a drunken butler to insult his guests? Jack could have shaken the old reprobate until the bones rattled again in his shrivelled skin. Dalrymple, however, seemed to think no more about the matter. He was entirely taken up with the suits of armour in the hall: indeed Olivia discovered him lecturing Jack on his own trophies in a manner that would have led a stranger to mistake the guest for the host.

It may be said at once that this was Dalrymple's manner from first to last. It was that of the schoolmaster to whom the boy who once trembled at his frown is a boy for evermore. And it greatly irritated Jack's friends, though Jack himself saw nothing to resent.

The Duke led his guest into the great drawing-room, and introduced him with gusto to Lady Caroline Sellwood and to Claude Lafont. But all his pride was in the visitor, who, with his handsome cynical face, his distinguished bearing, and his faultless summer suit, should show them that at least one 'perfect gentleman' could come out of Riverina. Jack waited a moment to enjoy the easy speeches and the quiet assurance of Dalrymple; then he left the squatter to Lady Caroline and to Claude. It was within a few minutes of the luncheon hour. Jack wanted a word with Stebbings alone. The more he thought of it, the less able was he to understand the old butler's extraordinary outbreak. Could he have been ill instead of drunk? A charitable explanation was just conceivable to Jack until he opened

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the pantry door; it fell to the ground that moment; for not only did he catch Stebbings in the act of filling a wineglass with brandy, but the butler's breath was foul already with the spirit.

'Very well, my man,' said Jack slowly. 'Drink as much as you like! You'll hear from me when you're sober. But show so much as the tip of your nose in the dining-room, and I'll throw you through the window with my own hands!'

The upshot of the matter was indirect and a little startling; for this was the reason why Dalrymple of Carara took the head of his old hand's table at luncheon on the day of his arrival; and obviously it was Dalrymple's temporary occupation of that position, added to his unforgettable past relations with his host, which led him to behave exactly as though the table were his own.

A difficulty about the carving was the more immediate cause of the transposition. In the ordinary course, this was Stebbings's business, which he conducted on the sideboard with due skill; in his absence, however, the footman had placed the dishes on the table; and as these included a brace of cold grouse, and neither Jack nor Claude were even moderate practitioners with the carving-knife, there was a little hitch. Mr Sellwood was not present; he never lunched; and Jack made no secret of his relief when the squatter offered to fill the breach.

'Capital!' he cried; 'you take my place, sir, and I wish you joy of the billet.' And so the thing fell out.

It had the merit of seating the Duke and Olivia side by side; and the happy pair were made distinctly happier by the mutual discovery that neither had as yet confided in a third soul. At the foot of the table, in the position which Jack had begged her to assume at the outset of her visit, sat Lady Caroline Sellwood. The clever young men were on opposite sides, as usual; nor did they fail to exchange those looks of neglected merit and of intellectual boredom which were another feature of their public appearances. Their visit had not been altogether a success. It was a mystery why they prolonged it. They had been invited, however, for the whole of August; and there are few professions in which a man's prospects are clouded by a month's holiday spent at the country seat of a duke.

Francis Freke said a Latin grace inaudibly, and then the squatter went to work at the birds.

They were a present from afar; there were no moors 'on' Maske, as Jack explained, with a proud eye on Dalrymple's knife. It flashed through the joints as though the bird had been already 'boned'; on either side the breast fell away in creamy flakes; and Dalrymple talked as he carved, with the light touch and the easy grace of a many-sided man of the world. At first he seemed to join in everybody's conversation in turns; but he was only getting his team together; and in a little everybody was listening to him. Yet he talked with such tact that it was possible for all to put in their word; indeed, he would appeal first to one, then to another, so that the general temper of the party rose to a high level. Only Olivia and Claude Lafont felt that this

stranger was taking rather much upon himself. Otherwise it was a pleasure to listen to him; he was excellently well informed; quite at the close of the meal it transpired that he had actually read Claude's poems.

'And lived to tell the tale!' he added with characteristic familiarity. 'I can tell you I felt it a risk after reading that terrible depreciation of you in the *Parthenon*; you see, I've been in England a few days, and have been getting abreast of things at my hotel while my tailors were making me externally presentable. By the way, I ran across a young Australian journalist who is over here now, and who occasionally scribbles for the *Parthenon*. I asked him if he knew who had made that scurrilous attack upon you, Mr Lafont. I was interested, because I knew you must be one of Jack's relations.'

'And did you find out?' inquired Claude, with pardonable curiosity.

'He found out for me. The culprit was a man of your name, Mr Stubbs; no relation, I hope?'

'I hope not,' said Stubbs, emptying his glass; and his pallid complexion turned a sicklier yellow, as though his blood were nicotine, and the nicotine had mounted to his face.

'I should like to hear that name in full,' said Lady Caroline down the length of the table. 'I read the article myself. It was a disgrace to journalism. It is only fair to our Mr Stubbs that we should hear his namesake's Christian name.'

'I think I can oblige,' said Dalrymple, producing his pocket-book. 'His name was—ah! here it is! His name was Edmund. Edmund Stubbs!'

Edmund Stubbs was not unequal to the occasion. He looked straight at Jack.

'Will you kindly make it convenient to send me in to Devenholme in time for the next train?' he said. 'If the Australian—gentleman—is going to stay in your house, I, for one, shall trespass no longer on your hospitality.'

'Nor I, for another!' Llewellyn chimed in.

And without further ceremony the clever couple left the table and the room. Jack looked embarrassed, and Claude felt sorry for Jack. As for Olivia, she had felt vaguely indignant with Dalrymple ever since he had taken the head of the table; and this scene put a point to her feeling, while it also revived her first prejudice against the squatter. Lady Caroline, however, congratulated him upon an excellent piece of work.

'You have performed a public service, my dear Mr Dalrymple,' said she. 'Dear Jack will, I know, forgive me when I say that those two young men have never been in their element here. They are all right in a London drawing-room, as representatives of a certain type. In a country house they are impossible. And, for my part, I shall certainly never send them another card.'

Jack, also, was ceasing to disapprove of the humiliation of Edmund Stubbs, whose remarks overnight in the Poet's Corner had suddenly recurred to his mind.

'Did you know it was the same man?' said he, pushing back his chair.

'I'm afraid I did,' replied the squatter, as he rose. 'They told me he was staying down here, and I could hardly avoid exposing the fellow. I

hope, my dear Jack, that you will forgive the liberty I undoubtedly took in doing so. I am the germ that expels the other germs—a sort of antitoxine in cuffs. *Similia similibus*, if my memory serves me, Mr Lafont. Before long you may have to inject a fresh bacillus to expel me! Meantime, my dear Jack, let me offer you a cigar to show there's no ill-feeling.'

'No, thanks,' said Jack, for once rather shortly; 'you've got to smoke one of mine. It's my house!' he added, with a grin.

And the remark was much appreciated by those to whom it was not addressed; on Dalrymple it produced no effect at all.

MARTIAL LAW IN THE PHILIPPINES.

SHOT FOR TREASON.

SINCE the beginning of the insurrection a number of military executions have taken place in Manila. The rebels shot under martial law during the first few months of the trouble were men of comparatively little standing; but in December and January last there were shot a number of men of considerable position and education.

On the 30th of December, Dr José Rizal, the only Philippine native author of importance, suffered the last punishment. Dr Rizal was a native of the Laguna province of Luzon Island, and was a man of high attainments and of great skill in his profession. As an ophthalmist his cures had gained him fame in the different places where he had practised.

Rizal spent a great part of his life in Europe, chiefly in Germany, where he associated himself with the Freemasons, and where he wrote his best-known books, *Filibusterismo* and *Noli me Tangere*. Both these books are directed against the Spanish and priestly rule in the Philippine Islands. They made him specially obnoxious to the monastic orders of the Roman Catholic Church, which have in the Philippines one of their last strongholds. Rizal returned to the islands some four years ago, during the viceroyalty of General Despujol, a governor who had shown himself very friendly to the natives as against the European and clerical element. His return proved to have been unadvisable, for he was at once arrested and shipped to the port of Dapitan in the north of Mindanao Island, to be kept there in safe custody. He seems, however, to have been able to communicate with the organisers of the rebellion, as the event shows. Just before the present outbreak he volunteered for service in Cuba as a doctor in the Spanish army there. His offer was accepted, and he sailed for Spain; but before his arrival there the government found proofs of his complicity in the rebellion, and they had him brought back, tried, and shot.

Rizal's name was, and is, one of immense power among the natives. They believed him to possess a charm against all kinds of arms; and they now say that he was not shot at all, but that the government put up a substitute for him, and that he has appeared at Imus, their centre in Cavite province. Doubtless their leaders have circulated this story for their own purposes.

On the 4th of January eleven leading natives of Camarines province were shot. Among them

there were three native priests. These eleven men were the head-centres of the conspiracy there, and their prompt capture at the beginning of the trouble prevented the disaffection from spreading in that province.

The most important set of executions of all took place in Manila on the 11th of January, on the persons of several members of the supreme council of the 'Katipunan,' or association of lodges composing the pseudo-masonic league, which is now known to have been a secret seditious society. Thirteen men in all were shot. The most important of them was Francisco L. Roxas, a member of the Legislative Council of the islands, a knight of a high Spanish order, and a man who held a high position in business and social circles. He was president of the league, and was charged with importing arms for the rebels, suborning native troops, and in other ways using his position to foment and assist the rebellion. The next in importance was a notary public named Numeriano Adriano, who had taken the usual oaths to the government, and had always been considered a worthy holder of the '*fé pública*.' There were also a sub-lieutenant and corporal in the army convicted of endeavouring to seduce their troops from their allegiance. Of the others one was a government employé, among whose papers was discovered a rebel nomination to the post of captain of the port of Manila; and the rest were Manila residents, of greater or less general consideration, but now known to have been important members of the head-council of the insurgents. None of them had taken the field. Their mission was to remain in Manila, affecting friendship to the Spaniards, and to act as secret agents and chiefs of the rebel cause.

In Manila military executions take place on the public promenade on the seashore. A square is formed, three sides being composed by troops and the fourth side by the sea. The condemned prisoners are put into the chapel of the fortress twenty-four hours before that fixed for their death, and there they are attended by priests, who lend them religious aid, accompany them to the place of execution, and remain beside them until just before the end. In all the cases before that of 11th January the prisoners walked the mile or so between the fortress and the execution-ground, but on the 11th they were brought in hospital vans.

The native of the Philippines is a stoical person, and he shows little emotion before being shot. Dr Rizal walked alertly and brightly to his death. The Camarines natives are said to have died very bravely; and of the leading Manila natives, seen by the writer on the ground, one only was prostrated and unable to stand or kneel before the firing-party. The rest appeared to be indifferent, or only somewhat dejected.

Traitors are shot in the back, and there is nothing revolting about the mere placing and shooting of the men. It is difficult to realise that the rattle of firearms, and the consequent falling forward of so many men, means that they have passed from one life to another before one's sight. After the volley the bodies are examined by doctors, and any one still showing a sign of life is given a '*tiro de caridad*' (charity shot) at close distance, to finish

the work. The police then form round the bodies, and there is a rush of the public, through the ranks of the troops, to see them. This is only permitted for a moment or two. The hospital men are quickly on the spot, and the bodies are removed for burial. The full realisation of what has happened comes when one moves forward, and sees the inert body and expressionless face in the place where a live man had stood a moment or two before. In most cases there is some mutilation from the heavy Remington bullets used; and where a 'charity shot' has been given the mutilation is very great. The sight is then revolting, what with the singed clothes and flesh and horrible open wound caused by the closely-fired rifle.

As a mere punishment to criminals these executions would be better carried out in private; but they are meant as a warning to others, and they are purposely made public, notice of them being given in the preceding day's newspapers. The crowds that go to see them are not extraordinarily large, and many more people go to see a garrotting for murder. The political question doubtless keeps the great body of the natives from attending them.

The earlier executions were entrusted to platoons of Spanish soldiers, armed with new pattern rifles of small calibre, but these were found unsuitable for killing at so short a range. The platoons are now always composed of native troops, armed with Remington rifles. The greater number of these native troops have remained loyal to the Spanish Government, and they show no repugnance at shooting their countrymen. This is probably due to the fact of the regiments being composed of natives from all the different islands. Only the Tagal provinces are at present in revolt; and the only desertions from the army have been of natives of these provinces.

The public execution of rebels in this wholesale way is doubtless a necessary part of the government policy in suppressing the insurrection; but it cannot but be felt that if the crime is great the punishment is extreme. It is to be hoped that the country will speedily be pacified, and an end be put to all necessity for such spectacles in the capital of the islands.

THE BELEAGUERED LADY.

CHAPTER IV.

I was so assured of the friendliness of those within the castle, so certain of the enmity of those without, that I made for the entrance as instinctively and about as speedily as a startled rabbit bolts for its burrow. I remembered only that I was Dick Harvey, a friend of the king, and that for the moment I stood in some danger. The little matter of my costume—that of a private in the army of the Parliament—I had entirely forgotten.

It was brought back to my mind, however, when I appeared in the open space before the castle entrance, for a shout of warning went up, and a dozen weapons were levelled at me.

'The password!' they shouted. 'Halt and give the password.'

For a moment I stood nonplussed. Then a quick thought came to me and I cried aloud, knowing well that Rose would be close at hand, though as yet I could not see her:

'Rose!' I cried, 'Rose! Tell me the word.'

It was a marvellous breach of discipline, but the answer came, shrill and clear: '*The Good Cause, Dick, The Good Cause!*'

Then I cried back to her, '*The Good Cause! The Good Cause!*' and somehow those that kept the gate must have been convinced that all was well. At any rate, I had hardly given back the word before I found myself within the castle, and dear Rose Mundy in my arms.

What happened around me in the next few moments I shall never remember, for it passed unseen so far as we two were concerned. It was, 'I knew you would come back, dear heart,' and 'I would have come through all the forces of the Roundheads.' Then she would change her tone and chide me for my daring, telling me that my duty was to have lurked in some place of safety until I found an opportunity to join the king's men as they came westwards. But even while she spoke in this way I knew her heart approved my action, as indeed it was bound to do; for her dear eyes spoke a thousand times more eloquently than her lips, and assured me of her pride.

This lasted for a while—how long I can scarce tell you—and then I remembered that there were folk about us, and that I had news of importance to tell. So I asked that I might be taken to Sir John, and presently found myself in the presence of some twenty people, gathered as it were in council, in the great hall which all men know, that is decorated upon the walls with representations of all the scenes in the ballad of *Chey Chase*.

'Hallo! what have we here?' cried Sir John. 'A prisoner?'

'A free man, sir, by the grace of fortune, and one that has the honour to be known to you.'

I advanced into the light, and a roar of laughter went up from those assembled, for I had not come altogether unruffled or unstained through the day's experiences. 'Tis young Dick Harvey!' cried Sir John. 'What brings you here, and by what contrivances have you made your way past the Parliamentary lines? They have captured half a dozen messengers that bore news of divers kinds since the siege began.'

'Why, sir,' I said, 'I take it 'twas *The Good Cause* that helped me. But my own adventures can wait for a day or two before they will need to be told for your honour's diversion. One thing there is that will not wait. I learned as I came through the marshes yonder that the enemy will make an attack upon us to-morrow night, in the hope of ousting us from our hold, and gaining a point of vantage whence they may defy the forces that come to our relief.'

'They were wiser to come to-night,' said Sir John. 'Tis true the army delays beyond our expectation, but by to-morrow we may well hope to have them here. How were they disposed over yonder?'

Now, I had been more concerned to gain the Mount and the castle that day than to spy out how the land lay, and this I frankly told him. Presently, after the precautions to be taken had

been discussed to some extent, I ventured to excuse myself, being thoroughly tired out by the day's exertions, and heavy with sleep.

Rose was awaiting me outside the hall, and made me tell her something of what I had come through while she plied me with food and drink. There was never such ale brewed as that which I drank that night with my dear love smiling approval upon each mouthful of food and drink that I swallowed.

At last, however, my supper was eaten, and I inquired for my bed. 'Good-night,' I said, 'and pleasant dreams to you !'

She smiled most tenderly. 'Dear heart,' she said, 'there is no dream left that is worth the dreaming now ! I shall lie awake and think that you are home again !'

It was a pretty speech, such as she had the secret of from a child ; nor has she lost it yet, in her old age. Maybe it pointed out a duty no less incumbent upon me than upon her ; but I was heavy with sleep, and when I had flung myself down upon my pallet I was not many seconds awake. Yet I can fancy her presence under the same roof, and the thought of all she had said to me that night sweetened my slumbers and gave me a completer rest.

They needed to shake me in the morning, for all the shouting in the world would not have sufficed to make me stir. However, I was glad enough to be awake, once they had aroused me, and ate a breakfast more than enough for two, washing it down with another draught of that delicious ale.

The day was spent in making all things ready for the attack which was expected. Each man looked carefully to his arms, and a committee inspected every gun, and discussed whether it was pointed in exactly the direction where it would be likely to work most mischief against an enemy attacking the castle.

The prospect of immediate action seemed to afford universal pleasure to the inmates of the place, though the ultimate event was not altogether assured. The chiefs that were over us had evidently no little anxiety, and were forever scanning the movements of the Puritans on the shore.

Towards dusk these became more notable, and the last that could be observed was a gathering of forces on the shore at the end of the causeway. The tide was rapidly receding, and we understood that they would advance upon us as soon as the causeway was above water.

The night was as still as that which had preceded it, and silence reigned everywhere. Listening intently, we presently heard sounds that came from the direction of the causeway, and told us the movement we had been anticipating had now begun. We awaited the attack in breathless excitement, every man at his post, and ready to follow upon a moment's notice the orders which had been given him.

The women were within the castle, where no injury could come to them from stone, cannon-ball, or chance bullet. I had had many words with Rose throughout the day, and though the dear child was the very soul of courage, and almost ready to bear arms herself against the Roundheads, whom she hated for the danger I had endured at their hands, I knew that she

had her fears also, and was now, for my sake, upon her knees.

The hour of nine arrived and nothing had happened. The noises had ceased to come from the direction of the causeway, but those who were watching told us that a disposition of troops was being made around the castle.

Suddenly a great sound of cheering began, and the enemy fired upon us out of the dark, their bullets beating against the walls above us, and making the whole air whistle like a flight of birds. Their cheer was answered, and a hot fire followed. Then another cheer, that altogether transcended its predecessor in volume and spirit, went up from our midst. Away in the north-east, where an ancient castle of the Tehidy Bassets stands upon the summit of Carn Brea Hill, a high flame burned brightly. It was the beacon-light. The friends we had been expecting were marching towards us, and there was reason to suppose they were close upon the rear of the enemy.

CHAPTER V.

The attack became more vigorous immediately, for it appeared that the Roundheads had seen the beacon-light, and realised that if they did not capture the castle without delay their position would become extremely dangerous.

The main onset was against that side of the castle which faced the land, and this choice of entry was but natural, since the place was by nature most open to attack in that quarter. But it did not lack the strong protection it needed, and the big guns were fired into the darkness with a cool regularity that ensured the greatest possible speed.

I myself was stationed in this quarter, though my arm was a matchlock. More than one good fellow fell at my side as the night wore on, and there were some among them who were seen, at a glance, to be beyond all need of the ministrations of the women, who were tending the wounded inside the castle. When such an one fell, it was with a stern desire to kill that we discharged our arms against the enemy, and such were the fiendish emotions aroused in us that certain screams of agony that ripped through the clamour of the fight sounded like sweet music in our ears.

The beacon-light still shone, a star of hope, upon the summit of Carn Brea, but there was no sign of the king's soldiers who were to come to our assistance. We fought on doggedly. Once or twice there were attempts to storm the castle from the landward side, and the guns were silenced for a space, to follow the retreating enemy with swift death, when our work with sword and rapier had driven them back into the night.

I was, somehow or other, bareheaded, and once came near to death, for a bullet flew so near to me that I felt it in my hair. A splinter from a stone cannon-ball rebounded from the castle wall and hit me on the forehead, so that I was well-nigh blinded with the blood that flowed from the cut it made. But the lust of fight had arisen in me, and I recked nothing of my injuries, only wishing that the enemy were at arm's-length, so that one could choose his man, and try direct conclusions with him. I began to grow tired of this incessant firing into the dark.

We had fought thus for an hour or two when there came a sudden lull. The enemy had found us stronger than they anticipated, and comprehended that they must finish matters out of hand if they would not have themselves shut in between two forces. So they fell off, and began to consider what plan should be adopted.

It was then that good Sir John conceived an idea, the mere mention of which sent us all half wild with joy.

'Lads!' he said, 'I can fancy you are sick of this firing into the dark. Moreover, I conceive that the Roundheads are about to make a desperate effort immediately, and I doubt if we have them at the best advantage while we are within the enclosure. In the open we take them from above, and I believe we may drive them back towards the mainland, where the reinforcements we are promised should be ready to receive them. Make ready for a sortie!'

Once again a cheer rang out, and the men made ready. There was one brave fellow, Geoffrey Laity, a seafaring man of Marazion, whom they were conveying to the castle that his wounds, which were serious, might receive attention. When he had heard this speech of Sir John's he flatly refused to be led away.

'Nay!' he said, 'I can make shift to stand, and, doubtless, there will be one of them found that's brave enough to come up to me and fight it out. I owe them something for these wounds, for I've been upon the seaward side mostly, where there was little doing, and I doubt if I have killed a man of them as yet.'

The self-same spirit was in every man, and it was not long before all was in readiness. A few were left behind—despite their impassioned protestations—to guard the gate. The rest went out into the night, and descended at a run towards the main body of the Puritans.

For a short space our sudden apparition seemed to strike them with consternation. Then they rallied and were upon us. There was no use of firearms at this juncture. One volley was fired into the dark mass that faced us. Then, with a cry of 'The King!' that drowned the screams of the wounded, we were hacking, and thrusting, and parrying at close quarters with the enemy.

I saw the end of Geoffrey Laity. He was the first to go forward, and he made straight for a gigantic Puritan, seeming to see none else but him. He went rapidly, with a curious, stumbling gait, and when he was near to the man he hewed at him with his sword, giving vent to a torrent of oaths. The fellow stepped back a little to escape the blow, and, an instant later, thrust out at his adversary. But he had no need to defend himself, or to strike a blow in the offensive. Geoffrey had staggered and slipped. Before the swift blow descended on his head, he had fallen, and lay quite still upon the ground.

Of my own part in the affray I have no very clear recollection. I call to mind many a bout with the sword, many a wild thrust at some Roundhead who happened to come near me in the *mêlée*. But the fighting was more like a clamorous riot of schoolboys than a regular engagement between two opposing forces. The nature of the ground was such that every one was continually on the move, and the crowd of the combatants swayed and fluctuated as the

mist of your breath fluctuates upon the glass of a mirror. Moreover, the darkness of night was upon us, so that foe and friend were hard to distinguish.

It is curious how the intelligent part of a man becomes subordinate to the mere brute in him at such a time, and yet asserts its predominance at intervals. I had become a mere fighting machine—if a machine can be inspired with a burning passion of hate—when I suddenly heard one of the enemy speak to a friend by the name of 'Zachary.'

The thing might be but a coincidence, yet from that moment I was on the lookout for the fellow who had been thus addressed; for I had jumped to the conclusion that he was one of those who had caused me some discomfort on the previous night.

I saw him at last, close at hand, but still I could not reach him. So great an enmity was in me against the man that I could not wait longer.

'It was no fox in the bushes,' I cried across the fight. 'Come and have it out with the man whom you were close to last night.'

To do the fellow justice, he was immediately manœuvring, as I had been doing for some time past, to bring about a meeting. But the fight was close about us, and both of us could but give attention to this at odd moments, since he had his life to guard from a score of swords forever hacking and thrusting at him.

Yet we were face to face at length, and I dashed upon him as a wave upon the rocky base of the Mount when the south-west wind is blowing. He parried carefully, and I had the sense to collect myself, and go more cautiously to work. He was a man hugely made, and very broad of the shoulders, yet his movements were quick and light, and his great reach gave him the advantage.

For a time we were at it, sword to sword; then I lunged incautiously, and in an instant he had taken the advantage I offered. A horrible pain shot through me, and I could not withhold a scream. The night turned crimson—I swayed, flung up my arms, and fell upon my face.

Yet in that awful moment, while I stood with a bloody veil about me, I was distinctly aware of a hush, in which the noise of horses' hoofs on a rocky road were audible. Wild cheers, and wilder cries of alarm followed immediately. Of many confused thoughts which shot through my brain in a moment one was a stupid wonder as to what these sounds implied.

CHAPTER VI.

I came back to consciousness in a cool chamber of the castle, and for a space lay wondering where I was and how I had come there. The room was darkened, and there was no token of human presence, but presently I shifted my position a little, and a swift stab of pain caused me to groan. In a moment Rose was bending over me, her sweet face very pale in the shadow and, I think, more beautiful than ever.

'You are awake at last?' she said.

'Tell me all that happened,' I said. 'I can remember nothing but my fight with Zachary. There was a noise of cheering, and the sound of horses galloping as I fell.'

She put forth a soft, cool hand, and smoothed my hair caressingly.

'It was the king's men who came,' she said. 'The Roundheads were put to flight instantly, but many of them have been captured and are now kept prisoners. I wonder if the man that hurt you is among them.'

'It does not matter,' I said. 'I am alive and have you with me. That is enough.'

'Dear heart!' she cried, 'if you could know the time I have passed through while you lay here unconscious and groaning now and again in a way that broke my heart.'

'What is the day?' I said. 'How long have I lain here?'

'For thirty-six long hours,' she said. 'You knew me when I found you. Do you not remember it?'

'I remember nothing after the awful pain of the wound from Zachary's sword, and the confused shouting that followed,' and she perceived my condition.

'The fight lasted but a little while,' she said, 'once the reinforcements had reached us; for the Puritans were soon in full flight for the mainland, where they strove to hide in the marshes and the waste lands thereabouts. But it was close upon the dawn when our party were all returned to the castle, and you were not yet come. I had been busy with the wounded all the night; but now there was little to do, and fear for you got the mastery over me. I set forth to seek you, and found you lying blood-stained where you had fallen. You knew me. Your eyes were closed, but they opened when I called your name, fearing that you were dead; and you murmured my name. You fainted away when they were carrying you hither, and since then you have only spoken in delirium. But even so you made me glad. Never pretend you do not love me well: I have heard your assurances to the contrary!'

'You shall have them again when I am a trifle stronger,' I said, 'but—'

'For the present you must be quiet. I have broken orders in letting you talk even these few words.'

I lay with my hand in hers, and gradually passed into a sleep that lasted a long time and left me infinitely refreshed and not a little stronger.

My recovery, however, was a matter rather of weeks than of days, for Zachary the Puritan had struck both hard and deep, and I had good reason to count myself fortunate in retaining my life. Nor did the illness thus imposed upon me prove so irksome as it might have done. I had seen little enough of Rose during the preceding months, and now she grudged letting any other attend upon me, even though it was sometimes necessary she should rest.

The fighting had receded eastwards into England, and, for a space at least, there was peace in the west when I found myself sufficiently recovered to go abroad for the first time. It was little enough distance I dare move, but no change could have been greater than that which I experienced in going from the room of which I had so long been a constant inmate to the open space outside the castle gate.

The sun was high overhead, and not a cloud could be seen from horizon to horizon. But a

cool wind was blowing, and the sea broke in white-caps here and there, murmuring about the base of the Mount with a sound that comforted as a draught of clear spring water comforts him who has long gone athirst.

Rose was at my side, and for some reason or other there were fewer people about than was usual. Such as there were had greeted me very kindly and turned to look after us as we made for the chosen spot. 'Rose'll be proud, sure 'nough!' said they.

Now, you may imagine that to sit in the open air again, with my sweetheart at my side, was for a time an all-sufficing pleasure. I had, indeed, been within sight and hearing of the sea while I was shut up in the chamber: neither is to be avoided if your dwelling be upon the Mount. But to see them thus with the free air of heaven cool against my face was to see them again, and I experienced such happiness as it is rarely given men to know.

Presently, however, I turned and looked down at the houses round about the harbour, my attention being attracted by the noise of workmen's activities. 'Why,' I said, 'they are pulling down old Marshall's cottage: it was the prettiest on the island, and one I used to covet. Why are they doing that?'

'Oh,' said Rose, pulling a daisy from the turf and plucking its petals one by one, 'did I not tell you that old Master Menhennick gets past his work, and is to be given a pension for the rest of his days? Sir John understands that the old man is fond of his house—he has been in it fifty years—and so he is going to build a new house for the new steward, so as to leave the old man undisturbed.'

She spoke lightly, and I wondered not a little, for I had hoped that I myself should succeed Mr Menhennick when he came to retire, and it had seemed to me that Rose had sufficient reason for sharing it.

'Who is the new man?' I asked. 'I have been out of the world, and you are not the good news-carrier I thought you.'

'Oh,' she answered, still playing with the daisy, 'tis a very young man, of whom his honour thinks highly. I believe that he is not yet ready to take up his work, but he will be coming to it soon. And he is to be married and bring his bride home to the house down yonder.'

This was an aggravation of my distress, and I could withhold expression of my thought no longer. 'Dear heart,' I said, 'I could almost wish that I had got back too late for the fight. I should have been the new steward had I not been laid aside and forgotten, and it would have been you that would come, a bride, to the house yonder.'

She laughed. 'And have I fooled thee, then?'

'Twas cruel to play upon me so. Is the story false?'

'Nay,' she said, and her voice was full of joy. 'There never was truer tale told. I did but leave out a part of it—I knew the name of the new steward and of the maid he is to take to wife. Canst guess?'

My arms were about her in a moment. 'Then I have not been supplanted?'

'You are the new steward,' she said. 'I kept

the news for to-day, though it was hard to keep it from you. . . . Nay, sir, for shame. Look! Here is Sir John coming to tell you I have spoke the truth.'

She rose, and blushing, dropped the prettiest curtsy as Sir John came smiling towards us.

THE BLOCK SYSTEM.

EARLY last October there died at Derby, the headquarters of the Midland Railway Company, Mr Warwick, for over twenty-five years telegraph superintendent of the line. That gentleman, as a railway official of the greatest experience, did much for the simplification and safeguarding of the system of signalling upon the Midland Railway, and at his demise, obituary notices immediately appeared in nearly every newspaper of importance, to the effect that he had been the original inventor and patentee of the block system, which had entirely revolutionised railway working throughout the united kingdom. As a matter of fact, this statement was entirely unfounded. Mr Warwick could claim to be the patentee of several refinements in signalling mechanism, and also in electrical indicators; but for the real origin of the block system and its gradual evolution it is necessary to look much farther back in the annals of railway history. Its story, however, has been the subject of so much discussion, and such misunderstanding, that a brief and accurate account may not prove uninteresting.

It is hardly necessary to mention that the object of the block system is to maintain a certain interval of space between all trains, instead of the uncertain interval of time as formerly in use. The line is divided into sections, varying in length according to the amount of traffic that has to be passed over it, and a signal-box is placed at the termination of each section, and provided with electric bells and block-telegraph instruments. As one writer simply explains it: a line worked on the absolute block system may be compared to a staircase, of which the signal-cabins are the landings, and the sections of line between them the separate flights of steps. No train may leave the bottom of the stair till the flight of steps and the landing beyond it is clear, and so on throughout the whole length of the permanent way. The signals controlling this system are as follows: The home signal, which, as its name implies, is placed close to the point at which it is desired a train shall stop. The distant signal, distinguished by a notch cut in the end of the arm, placed at varying distances behind the former, and merely repeating its movements. The starting signal, placed at the end of the section, and indicating when a train may enter the section in advance. The advanced starting signal, which is generally placed a few hundred yards in front of the starting signal, and enables a train which has passed the latter for the purpose of shunting or clearing the section in the rear, to be brought to a stand without entering the section in advance. It may be added that all semaphore-arms are fixed in such a way that on approaching them the arm appears on the left-hand side of the post, and except under special circumstances, such as severe curves, and where the same post is used for carrying both 'up' and

'down' signals, the post itself should be erected on the left-hand side of the track.

'We shall never be able to work our traffic with it,' said the authorities when the scheme was first mooted. 'We could never work the traffic without it,' would be the equally unhesitating statement of the railway manager of to-day.

When the Liverpool and Manchester railway was opened in 1830, the only arrangement made for signalling the trains was a flag by day, or a lamp by night, held in the hand of the railway policeman of the period, whose curious costume Leech has immortalised in the pages of *Punch*. About four years after the line had been opened, however, stout posts were provided, upon which the lamps were placed by the pointsman, and this really marks the first step in the creation of the present system of signalling. As soon as the electric telegraph was invented, Sir William Cooke and his coadjutor, Wheatstone, saw its value as a means of regulating and controlling the working of trains, and in December 1839 they induced the Great Western Railway Company to telegraph the arrival and departure of its trains from station to station between Paddington, West Drayton, and Ilanwell; and if a second train should arrive at any telegraph station before the previous train was telegraphed as 'arrived,' it was stopped by signals, and detained until such message was received.

This was, to all intents and purposes, the object of what is now designated the block system. In the year 1841 the same partners introduced independent instruments for controlling the trains, in order to show, at a glance, if the line was clear or blocked. On the left-hand top corner of a dial they printed the word 'stop,' and on the right hand 'go on;' and they also provided a brass pin in order to hold over the handle, and consequently the needle, to either side, while they further added an electric bell to call attention. This old instrument is now to be seen in the South Kensington Museum, with many others of a slightly later date. In 1851 the telegraph superintendent of the South Eastern Railway carried out the block working all over the company's system by means of a code of rings on the bell without making use of any dial instrument; but four years later it was thought better to revert to a dial instrument, and one was adopted having a miniature semaphore signal, with two arms instead of needles.

In 1853 the London and North Western Railway had added a third position to their dial instruments, and then had 'Line Clear,' 'Train on Line,' and also 'Line Blocked' when the needle was in the vertical position. Almost simultaneously with this the Great Western Railway adopted Spagnoletti's patent disc, in which little coloured shutters, bearing the same code as above, take the place of the needles, and revolve round to an aperture in a green blind as they are pegged over by buttons at the foot of the cases. As, however, the multitudinous bell-codes for attracting the signalman's attention, and announcing the character of the approaching train, had become a serious source of danger at the junctions of different companies, in 1884 a meeting of the principal railway managers was held at the Clearing House, when a more uniform system was agreed to. Lastly, in 1889, by the Regulation of Railways Act, the Board of Trade

were empowered to compel the adoption throughout the United Kingdom of an absolute block system on all railways open for passenger traffic. Practically every railway company owns patents of its own, which claim to simplify and safeguard the working of their instruments; many of these, like the Sykes electric block apparatus, described later on, being more concerned with the locking and interlocking mechanism of the points and signal levers; but in tracing the invention to its source Cooke and Wheatstone must be described as the real inventors of the block system, though the idea as set forth in Cooke's pamphlet entitled *Telegraphic Railways*, published in 1842, has been improved upon almost beyond recognition.

It will now, however, be necessary to go back again to refer to the growth of the interlocking system which has become so indissolubly linked to block signalling that it is impossible to treat these two distinct safety appliances separately. The reason for this is not far to seek. Signalling alone cannot ensure the safety of a train. The track itself, bristling with points, cross-overs, and shunting sidings, must be first prepared for it; and though formerly the two systems were worked separately, all engineers recognised that until they were amalgamated the possibility, nay, rather the frequent occurrence of conflict in working between the block and the interlocking apparatus was a most serious danger. As early as 1843 the levers for working the signals at a junction were provided with a simple mechanism to prevent the main-line signal being lowered at the same time as that for the branch-line, and in 1844 a scheme was patented for locking points and signals on the ground by means of locks worked by wire; but the idea of concentrating the levers was not suggested till several years later. In 1856 a successful attempt was made by Mr John Saxby at the Bricklayers' Arms Junction to concentrate and interlock the levers working both points and signals, and although the apparatus employed was crude as compared with the perfect mechanism now compulsory all over the country, it represented the earliest practical application of the invention which has since given birth to so many subtle refinements.

A writer in the *Engineer* some years ago gave a very lucid description of the intricate mechanism connected with any signal-box controlling an important junction, and very happily compared the long row of signal and point levers to the keyboard of an organ, every key of which is here connected by suitable rods and cranks to some one of the tongues of steel and semaphores which have to be played upon. But whereas a performer on the organ can produce, if he wills it, the most abominable discord, not so with the signalman—concord the latter must effect, for discord is utterly beyond his powers. For instance, as a mechanism known as the improved facing-point lock and duplex detector bolts the points securely in one position or the other, there can be no half-measures; while if owing to a broken rod the switches have not been moved at all, the signalman is warned of the fact by being prevented from lowering any signal which would be contrary to the actual position of the points themselves. Again lying along the inside edge of the rails, close to the points, is a long flat bar of

iron known as the locking-bar. Each time the points are moved, this bar must be raised above the level of the rail. Therefore, while a train is actually passing through the points it is itself master of the situation, for not even the signalman can inadvertently change their position until the whole train has passed clear of the locking-bar.

No sooner, however, had the idea of combining the block and interlocking systems become an established fact than the idea of making the train itself assist in automatically providing for its own safety by telegraphing its arrival and departure from signal-boxes was put into operation. In 1881 Mr Hodgson, of the great railway-signal firm of Saxby & Farmer, brought out an apparatus by which the passing train presses down a treadle placed near the signal-box and electrically connected with the telegraph instruments in the latter, so that the actual running of each train should exercise control over the signalmen. Another similar system now very largely used is the Sykes electric block apparatus, the invention of a practical railwayman, originally a humble employé, who has made a large fortune out of his indomitable perseverance. In the Sykes system there is placed beyond each station an automatic treadle actuated by the passage of a train to manipulate a circuit extending back to the indicator at the station; each station being also provided with an arm galvanometer which serves as an additional indicator. In the signal-cabin two indicators are placed, one reading either 'Line Clear' or 'Line Blocked' and referring to the condition of the section on the line beyond, the other reading 'Train on Line' or 'Train Passed' and referring to the section in rear. The former indicator is connected with the lock in such a manner that when it reads 'clear' the lock is lifted and the lever is free, but when it reads 'blocked' the lever is locked. It is thus practically impossible for one signalman to organise a collision. Once B has accepted a train from A, not only can A not lower his signal on his own account, but even B cannot give him permission till such time as the train has passed B's box, and pressed down the treadle on the way to C.

We now come to the great fog question. In fogs all the above arrangements may be entirely nullified by the driver's inability to see the signals; for however elaborate the signalling precautions may be, if a train runs through signals at danger the safety of railway working is ruined. Fog-signalling as it is now organised cannot claim to have moved with the times; for it still depends upon a man standing at the side of the line underneath the signal-post so as to be able to see the position of the arm. While the arm is at danger he keeps a detonator on the metals to warn the driver; when the arm drops he takes it off again. This service, needless to say, involves considerable danger to the men themselves, and great expense to the companies; for instance, the great fog of January 1888 cost the Sheffield company a bill of £1250, including as one item 360 gross of fog-signals. Lastly and chiefly, fogs come on suddenly, and till the fogmen arrive, there is the risk of drivers passing at danger signals which, owing to the absence of a detonator, they believe to be all right. Everywhere else, it is said, infallible or practically

infallible, mechanical appliances have taken the place of human frailty; why not here too? Inventors have been busy with the problem for years past, and patents innumerable have been filed on the subject. Some of them would substitute a mechanical for a human arm in placing a fog-signal on the rails. Others would fix a lever alongside the rails so that when the signal is at danger it may catch against an arm projecting down below the locomotive, and then either ring a bell on the engine, sound the whistle, or drop a miniature semaphore across the window of the 'cab' so that the driver could not fail to see it.

But the weak point of any such system is sufficiently obvious. The blow struck by a weight running up to hundreds of tons, and moving from ten to seventy miles an hour, would be so tremendous that the pedals or triggers thus set would be liable to be easily thrown out of gear, even if they did not become clogged with ice, snow, or dirt. An apparatus intended to surmount these difficulties has been invented by Mr Wilfrid Boulton, and according to a recent notice given of it in the *Times*, it may be described as follows: The essence of Mr Boulton's system may be said to be the establishment at the side of the line, and along the outer rail, of a magnetic field, proportioned in length to the possible speed of the trains to pass over it. An armature attached to the locomotive is then carried through the magnetic field in the close neighbourhood of, but making no actual contact with, the magnets. In the armature there are two independent needles which, being deflected to the right or left by the electric current set up by the magnets, make a contact and so ring a bell or perform some other operation to call the attention of the men on the footplate. It is as yet too soon to speak positively of the value of Mr Boulton's very ingenious invention, but so far where it has been tried in practical working it is understood to have operated without failure and to have given every satisfaction.

When we come to the working of single-line railways there is that almost perfect apparatus, Tyler's electric tablet system, which is rapidly superseding the old 'staff and ticket' system, in which there is always the risk that a station-master may give and a driver accept a ticket authorising him to steam on, when the staff is not really at the station at all. Mr Acworth in his *Railways of England* admirably describes the 'electric tablet' as follows: 'At A there is a box containing, perhaps, half-a-dozen tablets—they look much like quoits—belonging to the section A to B. Four more, making ten in all, are in a corresponding box at B. The signalman at A holds the key that unlocks the box at B, while B in return has the key to the box A. Now imagine a train at A ready to start for B; all the ten tablets being safe in their boxes. A calls to B through the telegraph, B unlocks A's box, the man at A takes out one tablet, hands it to the driver, and away the train goes to B. Arrived there, the driver surrenders his tablet and gets in exchange one for the next section, which we may call B to C. What will the signalman at B do with the tablet he has just received? If he has a train ready to go to A, he will send it back at once; if not, he will put it into his box. Till he has done so, not only

cannot the man at A set another tablet out of his box, but he himself cannot give him leave to do so, even if he would. For the electric locking is so arranged that it is impossible for more than one tablet to be got out of two boxes taken together at the same time. You may go on sending trains from A to B, one after another till the whole of the six tablets have been exhausted, and then change and send ten trains in succession from B to A, but to get two trains on to the same section at the same time is an absolute impossibility.'

On some lines in order to avoid stopping for the tablets, the latter are hung on wire rings, through which driver and signalman respectively thrust their arms as the train speeds by, while on the Great North of Scotland an apparatus which exchanges tablets automatically, on very much the same principle as the mail-bags are caught up and set down in nets, has been successfully working for some years.

A striking tribute to the efficiency of English signalling arrangements is made by the American engineer, Mr Dorsey, in his disparaging work, *English and American Railroads compared*. 'It is astonishing,' he says, 'to see the blind faith the English engine-driver places in his block-signals. In dense fogs, when he cannot see a hundred feet ahead, or dark nights when his vision is also very limited; for his head-light is only an ordinary lantern, useless for illuminating the track and only used as a signal; or, frequently, when he has both the dark night and dense fog to run through, yet he runs at full speed, and generally on schedule time, feeling sure that he is perfectly safe, because his block-signals have told him so, and they cannot make a mistake or lie.'

THE WHITE MAN'S POWER.

By ROGER POOCK,

Author of *The Rules of the Game*; *The Arctic Night*;
The Dragon-Slayer; *The Blackguard*, &c.

SOMETHING was amiss in the village. As I came down from the mission house I was thinking about an Indian woman who lay desperately sick. She might have bronchitis, or phthisis, or any other of a hundred chest complaints for all I could judge from the thousand symptoms described in the big medicine book. Anyway it was my duty, as a missionary, to heal that woman; so I had medicine for her in my pocket—good, wholesome castor-oil. To the poor savage woman that would be a priceless delicacy, and her unbounded confidence in me as a white man would make her believe that she was getting well. Faith is a wonderful healer.

But there was trouble in Gaetwingak; the Indians were going to and fro in swarms among the houses; indeed, a whole tribe seemed to have come on a visit, and come armed with rifles. The shamans were beating the gathering call on their laths, and the sound coming softly clear over the snowfields, the breathless haste of the rallying tocsin quickened my pulse and caught my throat, compelling me to stand and listen.

Suddenly, among the distant buildings, I saw Tsim-hoetz, chief of the Gaetwinthguls towering head and shoulders above the crowd, leading his

armed men out along the river-bank directly towards me. Where were the drums beating the rally? Ah! there I saw the medicine men in ceremonial robes behind the village, while the home tribe, the Gaetwingaks, were gathering about them among the graves of their ancient chiefs. And now I saw that these, like the Gaetwinthguls, were armed with Winchesters, that they were most of them pumping cartridges into their magazines, that they were all advancing in skirmishing order upon the visiting tribe. Both tribes drew out in long confronting lines, behind them sounded a low voice of wailing from the village, and then the men took cover behind graves and stumps and bushes waiting for the outbreak of war.

As for me, I stood on my snow-shoes looking down the little slope of the river-side trail, but as yet I was hidden by the few last trees just at the edge of the woods.

Last summer a man of the Gaetwinthgul tribe, a murderer defying justice, had been arrested in Gaetwingak by a white constable. Then he broke away and the white man shot him.

The laws of British Columbia, of Canada, of the Empire were a dead letter here; only a few weeks ago my people had threatened the life of a magistrate who came to make known the Queen's authority, had told him to go to the salt water and take his laws with him. In savage law a life must by immemorial usage be paid for a life, man for man, woman for woman, child for child; and by the use of the Gaetkshians, the people of Skeena, if a white man takes an Indian's life, the Indians will take a white man's life at the same place, by the same means.

Gaetwinthgul Jim had been shot by a white man in Gaetwingak, a white man must be shot in Gaetwingak by the Gaetwinthguls. And I, layman in charge of the Gaetwingak Mission, was the only white man within a day's march of the place.

I could hear an orator, perhaps one of the Gaetwingaks, speaking in my defence, but all that sounded to me then like an idle breath of wind. Beyond the disputing tribes a cluster of huge log houses, low gabled, confronted the ice-bound river. Masts of cedar surmounted with strange heraldic beasts stood up before their gables, and from the midst of each roof a column of smoke rose like a tree into the deathly stillness and the arctic cold. Beyond the village, and all around the horizon, were the great white Alps, unreal, spectral, visionary, and tremendous, barring out the world. Down the valley, a day's march, there was a missionary; up the valley, two days' march, a Hudson Bay post, a missionary, and seven gold miners wintering. Altogether we numbered twenty-five whites to four thousand five hundred Indians. Beyond, seven hundred miles away, was the nearest town with telegraph and railroad, but the trails were barred by winter so that no message could go that way for another hundred and twenty days.

I might take refuge at the Hudson Bay post but the line of flight would be marked by the track of my snow-shoes, and the Indians had plenty of men who could overtake me within an hour. I might go back to the mission house for my revolver, but if a white man showed himself sufficiently frightened to carry a weapon, the

Indians would begin to lose their respect. That might endanger all of us whites, men, women, and children. I never knew until that moment what it means to be an Englishman among savages, for even such a poor specimen as I am must carry out the never-failing tradition of our race, must face the odds if they be a thousand to one, must seem to these people only a little amused at their excitement. Moreover, if the two tribes were at issue, it was my duty to stand between them and make peace. So I thought of my Faith, I thought of the Flag, and went on, shaking all over with fright.

As I passed the half-finished schoolhouse, my interpreter whistled shrilly from inside, but when I ordered him out, he came, looking rather sheepish, dragging his rifle behind him by the muzzle. A more unsportsmanlike figure I never saw, especially because the gentleman always dressed like a parson in broadcloth and a 'dog collar.' I wore a pea jacket and deerskin breeches lest the people should mistake the mere *locum tenens* for a regular priest. My three other Christians were in the school with Winchesters, but I thought they were better there out of mischief, so let them be.

'Come,' I said to the interpreter, 'put away that rifle. I want you.'

He hesitated.

'Put away that gun!' He obeyed me, why I cannot think, because he had a much stronger will than I could boast of, and was as masterful a savage as I ever met.

'S'pose you go there,' he said sulkily, 'they kill you. Gaetwinthgul people he come for kill you, mister.'

In very truth, I wanted to run away, so I spoke pretty roughly. 'You come on—I want you to tell the people what I say. Come on, you coward!'

He came, furious at being called a coward.

By that time both tribes were on their feet awaiting us. 'Go back,' shouted the Gaetwingak chief. 'Go back!'

'Why, Tgauck,' said I; 'what's the trouble?'

So I came before the people, frightened to death, with a big pretence at being cool. 'Now,' said I to the interpreter, 'say to the Gaetwinthguls: "Why do you come with rifles to trouble my people?"'

The Gaetwinthgul chief explained at some length, but it was cold standing there with the thermometer at forty below zero, so I cut him short.

'The law is good,' I said. 'Life for life: my life for that of your tribesman, Jim the murderer. I will walk up to the schoolhouse, I will set my back against the wall outside, I will give the signal, and you shall fire. I make but one condition, that no man shall lay hands upon me unless I try to run.'

When these words were given by my interpreter, the people broke into loud protests at my terms, but the Gaetwinthgul chief ordered silence.

'Great chief,' he said respectfully, 'it shall be as you say.'

'And now, Gaetkshians, I am satisfied to die if you are pleased with the conditions. By the Indian law man for man; but the white man's law is this, that the tribe which kills white men shall perish. The Indian law is a life for a life, the white man's law is a tribe for a life, the

village wrecked and burned, the people driven away into the hills, slaughtered, starved, given to the eagles and the wolves.

'Do you not know of two villages down on the coast which were shelled and burned by the Queen's warships? You number a dozen tribes, but the white men number more tribes than are hairs in all your heads, more tribes than there are stars in the sky. Have you not heard that once all the country for many moons of travel to the east and south belonged to tribes like yours? They made war upon the white men, and now their bones are bleaching on the plains. A tribe for a life, that is the white man's law; and if you kill me, all of you shall perish by fire and war, by pestilence and hunger, until you are blotted out. If I abide by the Indian law to-day, are you content to abide by the white man's law to-morrow?'

Now the Gaetwingaks worked at the salmon canneries down on the coast every summer, many of them had been to Victoria and the big towns on Puget Sound, all of them knew how long is the arm of the law; and so they began to look uneasily at this business. But the Gaetwinthguls live inland from the river, a hill tribe, difficult to reach, who knew little of what lay beyond their valley; and they looked upon all that I had said as idle boasting. Somehow, in the last few minutes I had found out the nature of the Englishman, the man of the Conquering Race, who never thinks twice, who does not change his mind, who may be a coward yet never shows his fear, who brings his thoughts into contact with the ultimate facts, and lives or dies as God may judge for him.

'Come,' I said to the chief, 'do you accept my conditions?'

'Great chief,' he answered, 'you are not afraid of the Indian law. Why should we fear the white man's law? Are we dogs?'

'Yes, dogs. Come, follow me if you dare.'

I went to the schoolhouse, the Gaetwinthguls following, ill at ease, my Gaetwingaks trailing behind in the distance.

I stood before the front of the building, my knees very wobbly under me, too far gone to hope, too scared to pray. I am not of any family in particular, but I tried to think that probably some of my unknown ancestors had been hanged for courageous misconduct, or fallen in battle. I believe a great-uncle of mine died of scurvy in Nelson's fleet; I know that one of my brothers disappeared in Africa; and that two cousins in Burma and Australia deserved the worst which might befall them. At least I would not have my weak knees betray me even though I am such a coward; so, rather to cover my fright than with any better motive, I ordered those who were to fire that they should come nearer. 'You cannot shoot straight,' I said, 'because you are frightened.'

So they came within ten yards, kneeling with levelled rifles, and all the people gathered behind them waiting.

Then with some strange fancy moving within me, I lifted my arms, until both hands were level, touching the same beam of the log wall. I looked steadily at the chief, then at the men who were to fire, one by one in the face, then up at the Alps beyond the river, the tremendous

range which these people called the Unknown. Its splintered summits shut out the sun at high noon, pale, terrible, gigantic; they never allowed the sun to lift above them all through the winter months, but stood with the Day behind them, as though they had been the battlements of Heaven.

'Now,' I said. 'Fire!'

Not a man stirred.

'Fire!'

The silence was like the silence of death, and it seemed to me that I had already passed beyond the boundaries of life to meet my Master. My Master died like that, with His arms stretched out as though to draw all men unto Him.

Then I heard a little sigh out of the silence, and looking down saw that the muzzles of all those rifles were lowered upon the ground, while the men remained kneeling.

For many years the missionaries had laboured, it seemed, in vain among these people, but now because I had unthinkingly, perhaps irreverently, made the sign of the Cross, they all knelt down. The majesty of the British peace had failed me, the strength of the British law had not saved me, but the people who dared to defy the white man's power knelt down to the sign of the Cross.

KING CHRISTIAN IX. OF DENMARK.

AMONG the many crowned kings of Europe there is none more popular than King Christian of Denmark. Since the wedding bells at Buckingham Palace in July last, Denmark and its ruling family have again become most interesting to the millions of Britons who are never tired of singing the praises of their much-loved Princess of Wales. It was natural that the English nation should look favourably on the suit of young Prince Charles, and wish him well when he won the heart and hand of Princess Maude. This, however, is a sketch of King Christian of Denmark, the grandfather of Prince Charles. We have said that there is no European king more popular, but the reason of this popularity, both at home and abroad, is not so easy to explain. Perhaps it is because no one suspects him of sinister motives, nor of inscrutable schemes against the peace of Europe.

Another may be that every one knows his aversion to publicity. He never appears at public fêtes unless it is a case of *noblesse oblige*; never makes a speech unless compelled; never publishes verses like his genial neighbour, King Oscar of Sweden, nor composes tunes and dramas like the versatile Kaiser William. Indeed, it is doubtful if he ever kept a diary. King Christian, like a good divinity, does as he is bidden, and in this way has won the affections of his ministers and his people. It is this retiring country-squire disposition which has preserved the smallest sovereign of Europe (so far as real dominion goes) from many an intrigue or open revolt which a bolder ruler might have had to face, and has so endeared him to the bulk of the Danish people, especially the landowners. King Christian is nothing if not a husbandman, although he lives in a large capital and seaport, Copenhagen. The home-land of Denmark would, in Western

America, pass for a good-sized ranch, as it means only 14,000 square miles, but the other lands belonging to Denmark—Greenland, Iceland, and the West Indies—are rented to official tenants. By this simple plan and with strict economy, King Christian manages to keep his family in comfortable style even for royal blood.

The summer residence of the royal family is Amalienborg, a very pretty quadrangle in North Copenhagen, not far from the new free harbour, and quite close to the general barracks. His other chief residence, Frederiksborgslot (built by Frederik IV., the merry monarch), is a small but beautiful edifice in West Copenhagen, surrounded by enchanting parks and gardens and commanding an excellent view of the city and its surroundings. The old royal palace, the famous Christiansborgslot, once one of the grandest palaces in Europe, is situated in East Copenhagen, close to the Thorwaldsen Museum, but is now almost in ruins, as a few years ago a terrific fire destroyed all its beauties, leaving the rock-walls bare, like a deserted wreck on the strand. That the castle has not been restored is not because of any stinginess on the king's part, but from lack of means, for, considering his numerous family, the king is really poor. As for the Danish people, the enormous expense incurred in fortifying Copenhagen in order to prevent its falling into the clutches of either another Nelson or a second Moltke in a possible war, has drained them so that they have been quite unable to be generous to their monarch. And the monarch himself has been so exacting about making those fortifications that at times the long-suffering patience of his people has almost been worn out under the pressure of grievous taxation. On such occasions the king or his agent has merely reminded them of 1866, and the loss of Sleswick Holstein, whose population was largely Danish; and threats of socialism have yielded to patriotism for Denmark. Such is the domestic policy of King Christian. The capital of his kingdom he has had the pleasure to beautify greatly; but in this he has only carried out the plans of more ambitious predecessors, and in everything has merely obeyed the native simplicity of taste. This simplicity permeates his every act from the highest royal function of asserting his supreme will to the most ordinary performance of every-day life, and it is this which has ensured him that greatness not always vouchsafed to a king, the love of the common people, from the rich fields of Denmark to the frozen shores of Greenland.

It is by no means a rare event for his Majesty to drive through the principal streets of the ocean-bordered boulevards of his beautiful capital, the Venice of the North, in an open carriage, with scarce any suite. On such occasions, the populace, though numbering a large percentage of socialists and radicals, show their affectionate regard for the aged sovereign as truly as if he were a laurel-crowned Cæsar returning from victory. Indeed, he is a true conqueror, for being of foreign lineage, a German by descent, he has gained the good-will of the Danish people to the last degree.

In the matter of making speeches, King Christian of Denmark and King Oscar of Sweden occupy the two extremes; the one a matter-of-fact man, of few words and apparently of few ideas; the other a poet born and an orator of marked

eloquence and power. Thus, while King Oscar does not shrink from reciting his own poem at a public meeting, King Christian will prefer to talk about the weather or the last passing event. 'We have had a fine season and a bounteous harvest; let us give thanks to Providence,' is the Swedish report of one of King Christian's speeches. Of course, allowance must be made for press condensation. But in spite of his unimposing speech, he is a welcome guest both in Norway and Sweden, and his never-failing farmer's shrewdness quite makes up for his want of eloquence.

In no instance recorded has the homely beauty of this nobleman's character, whose fortune, or misfortune, it has been to be born to royal honours, been brought into bolder relief than on his visit to his distant and somewhat recalcitrant subjects in Iceland. The occasion was the millennial festival of the island in 1874, and the king, profiting by improved facilities of ocean travel, honoured these proverbially litigious and at that time actually rebellious tenants of his snow farm, by going to Reykjavik, and thus earned the fame of being the first crowned king to set foot on the land of the Eddas. There, too, among the lavas and glaciers, King Christian won a signal victory, greater than the exploiting tactics of monopolists, or the subtleties of jurists, and greater than that won by force of arms; for the little nation of Iceland has never been conquered in war. King Christian won the victory in his usual style. Clad in civilian costume, he entered the capital of Reykjavik, a port of two thousand inhabitants. He was met by his Grace the bishop of the island, and his Excellency the governor, both in official dress, and by them escorted up the principal street of the village. From thence he proceeded, riding on a half-wild Iceland pony, to the historic plain of Thingvellir, and was present at the national gathering on the very site of the ancient Althing, the famous tribune of the ancient Icelandic Republic; and there listened to some high-pitched oratory in the language of the brave old Norsemen, an oratory he must have envied.

Just imagine a real live sovereign standing in the midst of Icelandic peasants and fishermen, a rough-visaged crowd, good-natured enough just now, but still of such temper as might, under pressure, Hecla-like, remind one of former days; and to run this risk without any other bodyguard than a few peaceable Danes and a sprinkling of gold-braided sheriffs. Yes, on the very spot where so many tribunes of the old commonwealth had been held, where the booths still could be seen, where the ravines still guarded, and the volcanic hills still pointed to the mighty untraversed glaciers, his Danish Majesty showed himself at his best. Profiting by seeing the singular and self-willed Icelanders at home, the people whose complaints and demands he had listened to more or less unwillingly ever since his ascent of the throne, the king thought it would probably gladden the inhabitants of Snowland if he satisfied some of their most ardent prayers, and the most acceptable thing he could think of was to grant them a measure of self-government. Producing a document to that effect when the festivities were at their height, and the grass-green plain covered with thousands, the sober-minded king, in the presence of his officials and the assembled

multitude, handed the documents granting Iceland home-rule to the veteran champion of Iceland, Jon Sigurdsson, a man of superior ability in whom the king recognised the spokesman and leader of the people, and who accepted this material concession with unfeigned pleasure—it was the fruit of his life-work. The people, peasants and fishermen as they are, could not but feel what they once were, yet gladly accepted the new constitution, and honoured the king for his kindness. The loyalty which then animated the people, at least the upper and middle classes (if such classification be permissible in Iceland), may be gleaned from the following stanza of Jochumson's 'Greeting to King Christian,' sung in the king's presence at Lögberg.

With firm foot tread the holy ground,
Our Snowland's king, the noble-hearted,
Who from thy royal home hast parted
To greet these hills that guard thee round ;
Our Freedom's scroll thy hand hath lent us,
The first crowned king whom God hath sent us,
Hail ! Welcome to our country's heart.*

And so these descendants of the Sea-kings and Vikings, most of them for the first and only time in their lives, lifted their head-covering to a king, and made the Republican plain and the grim ravines ring with their cheers, a most remarkable display of feeling for Icelanders. Then the band struck up the new national air—an imitation of an Edda rhyme, composed for the occasion by one of their scalds :

By the stream Oxar,
By the Thingvalla,
Unfurl our free banner,
White falcon on blue ;
New era of freedom,
Now dawns on our nation ;
Our lives do we pledge her,
Forever true.

The populace caught up the music ; and the king's suite and the king himself were so touched and electrified by the surroundings, that they joined in the singing ; at least, so the story goes. But this much is certain, that every person present that day felt immensely more satisfied with the world in general, and with King Christian in particular, for his quiet, plain, and kindly demeanour towards them.

But the most characteristic anecdote told of King Christian during his stay in Iceland is of the homeliest description. His Majesty would often saunter beyond the outskirts of the capital, apparently to obtain a fuller view of the varied landscape—mountains, valleys, glaciers, islands—and would, for minutes together, stand on some eminence where perhaps a group of old-fashioned huts, such as travellers love to sketch, were huddled together. Into one of these, the most dilapidated of the lot, the king on one of these occasions entered, and in so doing he must have doffed his hat and walked more bent than is his wont ; for the passage of an Iceland hut will not yield much to a fox-hole in length and breadth—a device, of course, to keep out the frost. The king did get in, however, and finding there a little boy building what he called a house of sheep's bones, the king asked if he might have the house. 'No,' said the boy ; 'it is mine

own.' The king, thinking the boy was remarkably deficient in intelligence, pulled out a coin and asked him whose head was stamped on the coin. 'Looks much like you, man,' said the youngster without a moment's hesitation ; and the king, seeing that his intelligence was quite equal to his independence, patted the boy on the head and gave him the coin. This story had travelled over the island even before the news of the home-rule presentation. The fact was, the people accepted his home-rule presentation as a part-payment of their claims, but his kindness as his own.

Thus it is that King Christian holds his place as a sovereign, not because of exceptional ability, nor even by right of inheritance, but by the power of kindness. He is kindness incarnate ; and this is his most formidable weapon against social democracy.

BEATA SOLITUDO.

DEEP in the wood the throstle chants
His lyric strung with liquid pearls,
While sweet replies come from the haunts
Of mellow-throated, fluting merles.
Around the tassels of the pine,
In eager quest low hums the bee,
And drowsy lowings of the kine
Float from the clover-scented lea.

Sweet snatches of the milkmaid's song
Come o'er the dale ; then all is still,
Save the cock's clarion, clear and strong,
Blown from the farm upon the hill.
A twitter here, and there a strain
Of melody ; no harsher sound
Than the lone woodman's rumbling wain
Breaks on the solitude profound.

Here let us dreamily repose
Throughout the livelong summer day,
'Midst fragrant thyme and sweet wild-rose,
Earth's mournful music far away.
Here all the night the mellow moon
O'er the green aisles its watch will keep,
Whilst fairies chant their mystic tune
Which holds the lulling runes of sleep.

Here, by the fountain's mossy brink,
We sit in an enchanted dream,
Nor, in our gladness, seek to drink
Of Helicon's immortal stream.
Apollo's foot in classic shade
'Ne'er trod on glades so green and fair ;
And piping Orpheus never made
Such music as now fills the air.

O blessed Solitude ! of Sleep
The tender sister, thy kind breast
Is refuge for lone souls who weep
And yearn for peace and lasting rest.
Amidst life's constant, fierce travail,
When cares increase and joys are few,
When hope is faint and best friends fail,
Thine arms are safe, thy heart is true !

ALEXANDER LAMONT.

* Bayard Taylor's translation.

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THE EVOLUTION OF AN HISTORIAN.

BURNS, ere he passed away, expressed the opinion that a hundred years afterwards his work would be appraised at its full value. Edward Gibbon was guilty of the mild prophecy that 'a hundred years hence I may still continue to be abused.' The reply in the last issue of the *Quarterly Review* is that he still reigns supreme among English, and perhaps European, historians. Sir M. E. Grant-Duff reckons his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* to be the grandest historical achievement as yet accomplished on this planet. 'Whatever else is read, Gibbon must be,' says Professor Freeman; and Mr Bagehot has remarked there is no more solid work in the world, for it begins before the year one and comes down to 1453.

Gibbon left another masterpiece, in the shape of an autobiography, which Lord Sheffield, his literary executor, told the world in 1795 'had been carefully selected and put together,' but he did not say how or by whom. It is now almost a certainty that the real authors of the literary mosaic, known heretofore as Gibbon's autobiography, were Lady Mary Holroyd, afterwards first Lady Stanley of Alderley, eldest daughter of Lord Sheffield, and her step-mother. In its production different manuscript narratives of Gibbon's life had been used, all of which were written with perfect precision and in the author's most stately style. Gibbon's autobiography, as thus pieced together, has taken rank as the foremost of its class, and 'not to know it almost by heart,' says Mr Birrell, 'is to deny yourself a great and wholly innocent pleasure.'

The centenary commemoration and exhibition of Gibbon relics and manuscripts in 1894 re-awakened interest in the historian, and led to the purchase for the British Museum, in 1895, of his will, bills for books, and a catalogue of his library written on the backs of playing cards. These were purchased from M. W. de Charrière de Severy, of Lausanne, a descendant of one of Gibbon's friends. The Museum also acquired from the Earl of Sheffield the whole of the auto-

graph manuscripts of Gibbon which had belonged to the grandfather of the first earl. These included the seven autobiographical sketches, six volumes of correspondence, with the correspondence of Lord Sheffield and others. The first earl had laid an embargo upon the issue of any more Gibbon material than what had passed under his own hand in the published memorials. The present earl has taken a more liberal view of the matter, with the result that we have three handsome volumes, one occupied with the seven sketches of Gibbon's autobiography, now printed as he wrote them, with all the deleted passages restored, and two volumes of letters. About one hundred and sixty pages out of the four hundred and nineteen of the autobiography are new, and of the six hundred letters hardly more than a quarter of them had been previously published. The present Lord Sheffield introduces the autobiography, while the publisher, Mr John Murray, is his own editor; Mr Prothero is responsible for the letters. Thanks to the industry and enterprise of editor and publisher, we have now Gibbon's narratives as he wrote them; dark brackets in the text distinguish the paragraphs which there appear for the first time. There is no question as to the value of the autobiography; the letters are the natural supplement, and are well edited, and throw fresh light on his character.

Edward Gibbon entirely subordinated himself to the great work of his life, and, as Mr Cotter Morison says: 'There is hardly a parallel case in literature of the great powers of a whole life being so concentrated upon one supreme and magnificent effort.' He lived to write his great book, and in the process devoured and digested whole libraries. His patient acquisition of knowledge for his twenty-five years' task forms one of the bravest examples of self-help in the world of letters. It was his own, for 'not a sheet has been seen by any human eyes excepting that of the author and printer; the faults and the merits are exclusively my own.' It met with instant and deserved success and recognition. He is reported

to have gained £6000, while the booksellers had £60,000 by its sale. As Sir M. E. Grant-Duff said at the Gibbon commemoration meeting about this book, Gibbon's attitude to Christianity was the one feature in his great work which had done most to diminish its influence; and all educated men, to whatever school they belonged, would now agree with his masterly biographer that that was a most serious blemish.

It is curious to watch how he was insensibly trained for the great work of his life, and these three handsome volumes give us a fresh opportunity for re-telling the story. Edward Gibbon could boast of a good ancestry. There were Gibbons in Rolvenden in Kent in 1326, of considerable importance, while a certain John Gibbon was architect to Edward III. A younger branch of the Gibbons of Rolvenden was settled in London at the beginning of the seventeenth century, engaged in trade. From this stock sprang his grandfather Edward, who sat at the same board with Prior as a commissioner of customs; and Lord Bolingbroke declared that he never conversed with a man who more clearly understood the commerce and finances of England. His position however as a director of the South Sea Company cost him nearly £100,000; but, thanks to his commercial genius and enterprise, during the last sixteen years of his life he built up a new fortune not much inferior to the first. When he died he left considerable property in Sussex, Hampshire, and Buckinghamshire, besides a fine house at Putney in Surrey, his principal residence.

His only son Edward had as private tutor the celebrated William Law, author of the *Serious Call*; and his marriage with Judith Porten, daughter of a London merchant, caused his tyrannical old father to rather abbreviate his income in favour of his sisters Hester and Catherine. These two ladies figure in Law's *Serious Call* under the names of Flavia and Miranda, the Pagan and Christian sisters. It is clear that the historian had not much sympathy with his aunt Hester Gibbon, the pious Miranda, who, as soon as she was mistress of her own fortune, retired, with William Law as her spiritual guide, and a widow lady of the name of Hutchinson, to a residence at Cliffe in Northamptonshire. Here she lived for half a century, distributing her fortune amongst the poor and needy, and devoted to piety and good works. There William Law died in 1761; and if Gibbon did less than justice to the religious side of his nature, he extolled the lively, forcible style of his writings, which also drew the commendation of Dr Johnson.

Edward Gibbon, the eldest son and only survivor in a family of six sons and one daughter, was born at Putney, 8th May 1737. He was a delicate child, and but for the watchful nursing and care of his aunt Catherine Porten he would never have grown up to write the *Decline and Fall*, which might very well have been dedicated to her. He did quite as well, as he has embalmed her memory in his *Autobiography* as the one who fed his youthful fancy by interesting tales, and to her 'kind lessons I ascribe my early and invincible love of reading, which I would not exchange for the treasures of India.' She trembled lest his crazy frame would be permanently crooked and deformed, and 'many wakeful nights did she sit

by my bedside in trembling expectation that each hour would be my last.' He benefited by the newly-introduced method of inoculation; but it seems almost a miracle that he survived a long list of childish maladies when we remember that, in keeping with the practice of the time, at one period he swallowed as much physic as food. Late in life he noted that his body was still marked with the 'indelible scars of lancets, issues, and caustics.' His constitution became somewhat consolidated in his sixteenth year; and, save for gout, the remainder of his life seems to have been spent in moderate health. No wonder his early education was very intermittent; but, thanks chiefly to Catherine Porten, he knew by his twelfth year Pope's *Homer*, Dryden's *Virgil*, and *The Arabian Nights*, while in his grandfather's library he 'turned over many pages of English poetry and romance, of history and travels.'

His school-days were far from being the happiest period of his life; for in a passage now printed for the first time he says, 'A school is the cavern of fear and sorrow; the mobility of the captive youths is chained to a book and a desk; an inflexible master commands their attention, which every moment is impatient to escape; they labour like the soldiers of Persia under the scourge, and their education is nearly finished before they can apprehend the sense or utility of the harsh lessons which they are forced to repeat.'

Gibbon entered Magdalen College in 1752, before he had completed his fifteenth year; and here his 'indiscriminate appetite (for reading) subsidised by degrees in the historic line from the assiduous perusal of a Universal History.' He arrived, as he says, at Oxford 'with a stock of erudition that might have puzzled a doctor and a degree of ignorance of which a school-boy would have been ashamed.' Hearn's *Ductor Historicus* introduced him to the Greek and Roman historians. From the ancients he jumped to the moderns; and like Scott his taste was omnivorous and a surprise to his father's friends, who might find him surrounded by a heap of folios of whose titles they were ignorant. A continuation of Echard's Roman history was a forecast of his future labours, and to him 'the reigns of the successors of Constantine were absolutely new, and I was immersed in the passage of the Goths over the Danube when the summons of the dinner-bell reluctantly dragged me from an intellectual feast.' One book led to another, until he had ranged round the circle of Oriental history; and so before he was sixteen he knew all that was to be known in English regarding the Arabs and Persians, Tartars and Turks.

He characterises the fourteen months which he spent at Magdalen College as the most idle and unprofitable of his whole life. 'The fellows of my time,' he says, 'were decent easy men who supinely enjoyed the gifts of the founder; their days were filled by a series of uniform employments. . . . From the toil of reading, or thinking, or writing, they had absolved their conscience. . . . Their conversation stagnated in a round of college business, Tory politics, proxy anecdotes, and private scandals; their dull and deep potations excused the brisk intemperance of youth.' He shirked his lectures, got into indifferent company, and 'read' himself into the Church of Rome, only to read himself out of it

a year later. This meanwhile shut the gates of Oxford against him, and his punishment at the hand of his father took the form of exile at Lausanne, Switzerland, in the home of M. Paviliard, a Calvinist clergyman. Here his love for reading revived, and he made rapid progress in French and German, besides making abstracts of many Greek and Roman authors. Pascal taught him how to 'manage the weapon of grave and temperate irony'! One of the restored passages tells us that in genius, learning, and manners he owes his creation to Lausanne; and there it was that the statue was discovered in the block of marble—'my own religious folly, my father's blind resolution, produced the effects of the most deliberate wisdom.'

The main events in his studious and sedentary life at Lausanne were his meeting with Voltaire and his falling in love with a young French lady named Susanna Curchod, afterwards Madame Necker, mother of Madame de Staël, an episode which would require a separate article to do it justice. But though he 'sighed like a lover, he obeyed like a son,' and this dream passed like the mist on the mountain. Unlike Scott he had no great ambition, as he tells us in one of the restored passages, to found a family and perpetuate the name of Gibbon.

Gibbon was back in London in 1758, just about his coming of age, when his father settled an annuity of £300 a year upon him, having previously, to free himself from financial difficulties, cut off the entail of the estate, and raised a large sum upon mortgage. In London he was within easy reach of his father's residence at Buriton, near Petersfield, Hampshire; but the old gentleman could never inspire his bookish son with a love for farming, and he neither handled a gun nor mounted a horse. He had the greatest satisfaction, however, in adding to his library, and every book found a place there because he loved it or found it useful. He had warm domestic affections, and his meetings with his aunt Catherine Porten were usually the signal for effusions of joy and tenderness; he even became quite attached to his step-mother. He joined the militia and had charge of an independent corps of officers and men; but the constant changing of quarters and the lack of privacy and leisure, as might be expected, made the work distasteful to him. He was even now turning over in his mind some historical project (at one time it was Raleigh) which must not be English, and must not be narrow. He credits the service in the militia, distasteful as it had been, with making him an Englishman and a soldier. Soon after the disbanding of the militia we find him in Paris, whence he journeyed to Italy by way of Lausanne; and it was while at Rome in the autumn of 1764, 'as I sat musing amid the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind.'

For the next five years (1765-1770) he was in his father's house revolving various literary schemes, and harassed by the difficulties which his unthrifty parent was bringing upon the household. Two years after his father's death he was able to settle at No. 7 Bentinck Street, near Manchester Square, a solitary bachelor, not en-

tirely at ease in money matters. Within three years of his settlement in London he had produced the first volume of the *Decline and Fall*. One wonders with Frederic Harrison how so gigantic a work was 'completed in about sixteen years, amidst all the distractions of city squares, London gaieties, parliamentary and official duties, interminable worries about his farm and property, social scandals, and unfortunate friends.' His habit of utilising the morning hours, like Scott, doubtless explains a great deal. He finished his reading before he began to write; and, from the little we know about his methods, he seems to have worked with great ease and mastery of his materials, and never felt his subject a strain. 'One of its charms,' says Mr J. Cotter Morison, 'is a constant good humour and complacency; not a sign is visible that the writer is pressed for time or wants to get his performance out of hand; but, on the contrary, a calm lingering over details, sprightly asides in the notes which the least hurry would have suppressed or passed by, and a general impression conveyed of thorough enjoyment in the immensity of the labour.' For the reader to understand the art by which it is written it should be read through. We know that he wrote the first chapter three times, and the second and third twice, before he was satisfied. The final two chapters were revised three times in order to reduce their bulk, and more time was spent over the first volume than over any of the other five. The time occupied over the first volume was three years, while the others cost him two years' labour each.

One morning, he tells us, 'as he was destroying an army of barbarians,' a knock came to the door, and the tempter appeared in the shape of a friend offering to secure him a seat in parliament for the borough of Liskeard. Gibbon represented the borough for ten years (1774-1783) without ever opening his mouth; and once when moved to do so he lacked the confidence to carry him through. The great speakers filled him with despair, and the bad ones with terror. He grew heart-tired of 'this Parliamentary prattle' and of 'the noise and nonsense of the Pandemonium,' as he terms parliament in his letters.

The last two volumes of his history were written at Lausanne, and every one is familiar with the noble passage in which he records the finish of his labours on the day, or rather the night, of the 27th June 1787. 'Between the hours of eleven and twelve I wrote the last lines of the last page in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future fate of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious.'

This was so. Probably his early infirm constitution, and good living, taken with his extremely

sedentary habits, shortened his life. His death took place at 76 St James Street, London, on 16th January 1794. His remains rest in Lord Sheffield's burial-place in Fletching, Sussex.

Gibbon's ideal seems to have been to do what he liked, without regard to the world or to fashion. 'A few friends and a great many books may entertain me; but I think fifteen hundred people the worst company in the world.' The airs of a dandy, which he sometimes adopted, were the accidents of his life. The love of his books and the love of his friends were his genuine passions. As Frederic Harrison says, after a perusal of these volumes, Gibbon appears 'as one of the most genial, affectionate, vain, and contented natures in literary history, with a genius for friendship, indulgent almost to a fault toward all failings, gently fond of all pleasant things and people, and willing to put up with much for the sake of an easy life. Never was any man less heroic, who less pretended to the heroic, with more perfectly worldly ideals, and a more instinctive repugnance to any enthusiasm.'

Dr Johnson thought him 'an amazing ugly fellow;' Boswell did not like him; while Horace Walpole managed to offend him by a criticism on his history. Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom he sat for his portrait, got on well with him, while Lord Sheffield and he were like brothers. He was on the whole a dutiful son and step-son and a faithful friend. The letters show an affectionate and kindly disposition; those to his publisher regarding his great history express gratification at its splendid reception. He repeatedly plays upon the word *Decline*, and concludes that booksellers are, after all, not the worst patrons of literature.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER XVIII.—HECKLING A MINISTER.

THE engagement became known in the course of the afternoon, and the news was received in a manner after all very gratifying to the happy pair. Lady Caroline Sellwood did indeed insist on kissing her future son-in-law, but the obvious attitude she now assumed did not impose upon him for a moment. He had seen through her the night before; he could never believe in the woman again. In any case, however, her affection of blank surprise, and her motherly qualms concerning the prospective loss of her ewe-lamb, were a little overacted even for so inexperienced an observer as the Duke of St Osmund's. She knew it too, and hated Jack with all her hollow heart for having found her out; to him it was after this a relief to listen to the somewhat guarded observations of Mr Sellwood, whose feelings in the matter were just a little mixed.

Of the rest, Francis Freke volunteered his services for the great event, and both he and his wife (who brought down her entire speaking family to say good-night to 'Uncle Jack') were consumed with that genuine delight in the happiness of others which was their strongest point. Claude, too, was not only 'very nice about it,' as Olivia said, but his behaviour, in what was for him a rather delicate situation, showed both tact and self-control. Never for a moment did look

or word of his suggest the unsuccessful suitor: though to be sure he had scarcely qualified for such a rôle. Olivia and he had never been more than friends. On her side, at least, the friendship had been of that perfectly frank and chronic character which is least likely to develop into love. And no one knew this better than Claude himself, who, moreover, was not even yet absolutely sure that his own undoubted affections were inspired by the divine impulse for which his poet's heart had so often yearned. At all events he had thought upon the one maiden for very many months; and putting it no higher than this, his present conduct was that of a tolerably magnanimous man.

The one person who raised an unsympathetic eyebrow at the news was Dalrymple the squatter. He seemed surprised, and, for the moment, rather annoyed; but Jack recalled the deplorably cynical view of women for which the owner of Carara had been quite notorious in the back-blocks, and the squatter's displeasure did not rankle. Nor was it expressed a second time. Either the sight of the pair together, who made no secret of their happiness; either this pretty spectacle, or the dictates of good taste, moved Dalrymple, ultimately, to the most graceful congratulations they had yet received. And it was characteristic of the man that his remarks took the form of an unsolicited speech at the dinner-table.

He had been only a few hours in the house, yet to all but Mr Sellwood (who did not meet him until evening) the hours seemed days. For the squatter was one of those men who carry with them the weight of their own presence, the breath of an intrinsic power, subtly felt from the first; thus the little house-party had taken more notice of him in one afternoon than the normal stranger would have attracted in a week; and to these it already seemed inevitable that he should lead and that they should follow, whether they would or no. Accordingly, they were not in the least surprised to see Dalrymple on his legs when the crumb-cloth had been removed, though all but Jack deemed the act a liberty; and the squatter still adopted the tone of a master felicitating his man rather than that of a guest congratulating his host.

Yet the speech was fluent and full of point; and the speaker himself made a sufficiently taking figure, leaning slightly forward, with the tips of his well-shaped fingers just resting on the black oak board that dimly reflected them. An unexceptionable shirt-front sat perfectly on his full deep chest, a single pearl glistening in its centre; and there was a gleam of even teeth between the close-cropped, white moustache, and the ugly, mobile, nether lip, whence every word fell distinct and clear of its predecessor. The Home Secretary had heard a worse delivery from his own front bench; and he was certainly interested in the story of the iron hut and the savages of Northern Queensland which Dalrymple repeated with the happiest effect. Olivia forgave him certain earlier passages on the strength of these; her heart was full; she dare not take her eyes from the simple chain about her wrist, for they were dim. The speech closed with the dramatic climax of the tale; there had been but one interruption to the flow of well-chosen words,

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and that was when the speaker stopped to blow out a smoking candle without appealing to his host.

The health of the pair was then drunk, with appropriate enthusiasm; poor Jack blurted out a few honest words, hardly intelligible from his emotion, and the three ladies left the room.

'There's one more point to that yarn,' said Dalrymple, closing the door he had held open, 'that I don't think you yourself are aware of, Jack. It was when you got back to the store, with your shirt burnt off your back, and the country in a blaze all round, that I first noticed the legend on your chest. As you probably know, Mr Sellwood, the Duke has one of the French eagles tattooed upon his chest. I saw it that day for the first time; I felt sure it meant something. And years afterwards, when I heard that a London solicitor was scouring the colonies for the unknown Duke of St Osmund's, it was the sudden recollection of that mark which made me, to some extent, the happy instrument of his discovery.'

'To every extent!' cried Jack, wringing his benefactor's hand. 'I've always said so. Mr Sellwood, I owe him everything, and yet he makes a song about my searing away a few black-fellows with a bush fire! By the hokey, I've a good mind to have him live happily with us ever after for his pains!'

The Home Secretary bent his snowy head; his rosy face was the seat of that peculiarly grim expression with which political caricaturists have familiarised the world. Dalrymple's light eyes twinkled like polished flints; here was high game worthy of his gun. He took the empty chair on Mr Sellwood's left.

'I understand, sir, that you are fatally bitten with golf?' began the squatter, in his airiest manner.

The other lit a cigarette with insolent deliberation before replying.

'I'm fond of the game,' he said at length, 'if that's what you mean.'

'That was precisely what I did mean. Pardon me if I used an unparliamentary expression. I have lately read so much in your English papers—with which I never permit myself to lose touch—of the far-reaching ravages of the game. Certainly the disease must be wide-spread when one finds a Cabinet minister down with the—golf!'

'We don't pronounce the *l*,' Mr Sellwood observed. 'We call it *goff*.' For though in political life an imperturbable temper was one of his most salient virtues, the Home Secretary was notoriously touchy on the subject of his only game.

Dalrymple laughed outright.

'A sure symptom, my dear sir, of a thoroughly dangerous case! But pray excuse my levity; I fear we become a little too addicted to chaff in the uncivilised wilds. I am honestly most curious about the game. I'm an old foggy myself, and I might like to take it up if it really has any merits'—

'It has many,' put in Claude cheerily, to divert an attack which Mr Sellwood was quite certain to resent.

'Has it?' said the squatter incredulously. 'For the life of one I can't see where those merits come in. To lay yourself out to hit a sitting ball! I'd as soon shoot a roosting hen!'

'Hear, hear!' cried Jack. 'That's exactly what I say, Mr Dalrymple.'

The discussion had in fact assumed the constituent elements of a 'foursome'; this was no doubt the reason why the Home Secretary was unable any longer to maintain the silence of dignified disdain.

'I should like to take you out, the two of you,' he said, 'with a driver and a ball between you. I should like to see which of you would hit that sitting ball first, and how far!'

'We'll take you on to-morrow!' exclaimed Jack.

But the Home Secretary made no reply.

'I'm not keen,' remarked Dalrymple. 'It can't be a first-class game.'

'You're hardly qualified to judge,' snapped Sellwood, 'since you've never played.'

'Exactly why I *am* qualified. I'm not down with the disease.'

'Then pray let us adopt the Duke's suggestion, and play a foursome to-morrow—as we sit. Eh, Mr—— I beg your pardon, but I quite forget your name?'

'Dalrymple,' replied the squatter; 'and yours once more?'

'Look in Whitaker,' responded the Home Secretary, rising; and he left the table doubly angered by the weakness of his retort, where indeed it was weak to have replied at all.

Decidedly the squatter was no comfortable guest. Apart from his monstrous freedom of speech and action, which might pass perhaps on a bush station, but certainly not in an English country house, he was continually falling foul of somebody. Now it was the butler, now a fellow-guest, and lastly a connection of his host, and one of Her Majesty's ministers into the bargain. In each case, to be sure, the other side was primarily in the wrong. The butler was the worse for drink; the *Parthenon* man had indulged in gratuitous abuse of his friend; even Mr Sellwood had taken amiss what was meant as pure chaff, and had been the first to begin the game of downright rudeness at which the old Australian had soon beaten him. Yet the fact remained that Dalrymple was the moving spirit in each unpleasantness; he had been a moving spirit since the moment he set foot in the house, and this was exactly what the other guests resented. But it was becoming painfully apparent that Jack himself would take nothing amiss; that he was constitutionally unable to regard Dalrymple in any other light than that of his old master, who could still do no wrong. And this being so, it was impossible for another to complain.

Indeed, when Mr Sellwood joined the ladies, who happened to be in the conservatory, with savage words upon his lips, his wife stuck up for the maligned colonist. That, however, was partly from the instinct of conjugal opposition, and partly because Lady Caroline was herself afraid of 'this fellow Dalrymple,' as her husband could call him fluently enough behind his back. The other men were not long in joining the indignant minister. They had finished their cigarettes, but Jack had donned his gorgeous smoking-cap by special request of Lady Caroline, who beamed upon him and it from her chair.

'Hallo! have you come in for that thing?'

exclaimed Mr Sellwood, who was in the mood to hail with delight any target for hostile criticism. 'I always thought you intended it for Claude, my dear Caroline?'

'It turned out to be a little too small for Claude,' replied her ladyship sweetly.

'Claude, you've had an escape,' said the Home Secretary. 'Jack, my boy, you have my sympathy.'

'I don't require it, thank you, sir,' laughed the Duke. 'I'm proud of myself, I tell you! This'd knock 'em up at Jumping Sandhills; wouldn't it, Mr Dalrymple?'

'It would indeed: so the cap goes with the coronet, does it?' added the squatter, but with such good humour that it was impossible to take open umbrage at his words. 'I wonder how it would fit me?' And he lifted the thing off Jack's head by the golden tassel, and dropped it upon his own.

'Too small again,' said Jack: indeed the purple monstrosity sat upon the massive hairless head like a thimble on a billiard-ball.

'And it doesn't suit you a bit,' added Olivia, who was once more in a simmer of indignation with her lover's exasperating friend.

'No more would the coronet,' replied Dalrymple, replacing the smoking-cap on its owner's head. 'By the way, Jack, where do you keep your coronet?'

'Where do I keep my coronet?' asked the Duke of his major-domo. 'I've never set eyes on it.'

'They have it at the bank,' said Claude.

'And much good it does you there!' exclaimed Dalrymple. 'Shall I tell you what I'd do with it if it were mine?'

'Yes, do,' said Jack, smiling in advance.

'Then come outside and you shall hear. I am afraid I have shocked your friends sufficiently for one night. And there's a very fascinating moon.'

(To be continued.)

MUSICAL WIT AND HUMOUR.

By J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

No, not the wit and humour of the older masters; for who wants again to hear how Handel used to leave his friends at table because he had a musical 'thought' to write down, and would afterwards be found in another room helping himself to a superior wine? Or that other story of ordering dinner for three that he might make sure of having enough for one? These, and such like, are as stale as the philosophy of Martin Tupper. The wit and humour of the later masters has a flavour altogether different. Let us sample it and see.

Supposing we begin with Rossini, the Charles Lamb of music. Never, surely, was composer more witty than the master who gave us an immortal setting of *William Tell*. His whimsicality extended even to his birthday. Having been born in leap-year, on February 29, he had of course a birthday only once in four years; and when he was seventy-two he facetiously invited his friends to celebrate his eighteenth birthday! Some of the best specimens of his wit were shown in connection with brother composers. 'You

know,' he said one day, speaking to a friend, 'you know what pretty dance tunes Auber has always written'—Auber being as likely to write dance tunes as Rossini was to write a sermon. The *maestro* seldom went to the opera or to any place of amusement, but he could not resist the temptation of hearing one of Wagner's works. It was *Tannhäuser*. Afterwards, when asked to give his opinion of the opera, he said: 'It is too important and too elaborate a work to be judged after a single hearing, but so far as I am concerned, I shall not give it a second.' Rossini indeed had a sad contempt for the hero of Baireuth. Somebody once handed him the score of one of Wagner's latest productions, and presently remarked that he was holding the music upside down. 'Well,' replied Rossini, 'I have already read it the other way, and am trying this, as I can really make nothing of it.' If Wagner did not escape, it was hardly likely that Liszt would. One day the eminent pianist tried the *maestro* with a certain Symphonic Poem which he had just composed. Rossini heard it through, and then blandly remarked: 'I prefer the other.' Liszt naturally inquired 'which other?' 'The representation of "chaos" in Haydn's *Creation*,' was the withering reply.

As a matter of fact, Rossini seems to have had scant respect for anybody's music but his own. Upon amateurs he was especially severe. A few days after Meyerbeer's death a young admirer of his called upon the composer of *William Tell* with an elegy which he had written in honour of his idol. 'Well,' said Rossini, after hearing the composition played over, 'if you really want my honest opinion, I think it would have been better if you had died and Meyerbeer had written an elegy.' Again, there is that other story told by Mr Kuhe about Prince Poniatowski, whose *Yeoman's Wedding Song* used to be so popular. The Prince had long entertained the hope of having one of his works performed at the Grand Opera of Paris. At length his ambition was likely to be realised, but he had two operas lying beside him, and he could not decide as to which was the better. He resolved to ask Rossini's advice. The composer said he would hear the two works played through on the piano. Next morning Poniatowski arrived, armed with his scores. He sat down to the instrument, and went right through one of them. When he had finished, Rossini, whose patience was by this time thoroughly exhausted, turned to him and said quietly: 'Now, my friend, I can advise you; have the other one performed.' The incident recalls a story told of Dr Arne, the composer of *Rule Britannia*. Arne was once called upon to judge between two very bad singers. He listened to them patiently, and then said to one of the contestants: 'You are the worst singer I ever heard in my life.' The other was naturally exultant, and remarked that of course he had won. 'No,' said Arne; 'you can't sing at all.'

But to return to Rossini. Sometimes the amateurs would endeavour to bribe him into a compliment by sending him a little present. The ruse, however, was but seldom effectual. A budding composer once accompanied his new composition with a Stilton, hoping, of course, to have a letter praising the work. The letter came, but all it said was: 'Thanks, I like the cheese

very much.' Rossini's witticisms indeed bubbled forth at all times and under all circumstances. On one occasion a gentleman called on him to enlist his aid in procuring for him an engagement at the Opera. He was a drummer, and he had taken the precaution to bring his instrument. Rossini said he would hear him 'play,' and it was decided that he should show off in the overture to *Semiramide*. The very first bar of the overture contains a tremolo for the drum, and when this had been performed, the player remarked: 'Now I have a rest of seventy-eight bars; these of course I will skip.' This was too good a chance to be lost. 'Oh no,' said the composer; 'by all means count the seventy-eight bars. I particularly wish to hear those.' Rossini was, it need hardly be said, an excellent *raconteur* himself. One morning he was at a sumptuous breakfast party, and was refusing one after another all the dainties that were offered to him. The hostess noticed his unwavering abstinence with equal surprise and regret, and presently asked him whether he was unwell. Rossini answered with an anecdote. 'The position I now occupy at your table,' he said, 'reminds me of an odd experience that befell me some years ago in a provincial town of Italy. A performance of the *Barber* was being given in my honour in the local theatre. While the overture was in full swing I noticed a huge trumpet in the orchestra, manifestly blown with remarkable force and continuity by a member of the band; but not a sound in the least akin to the tone of that instrument could I hear. At the close of the performance I interviewed the conductor, and asked him to explain the purpose of the noiseless trumpet. He answered: "*Maestro*, in this town there is not a living soul who can play the trumpet; therefore I specially engaged an artist to hold one up to his lips, binding him by an oath not to blow into it, for it looks well to have a trumpet in an operatic orchestra." I am like that man with the trumpet. I may not eat, but I look well at your breakfast-table.' And so no doubt he did, for learning had certainly not made him lean.

Some of these anecdotes of Rossini remind us that composers, as a rule, have not figured amiably as critics of each other. Handel swore that Gluck knew no more about counterpoint than his cook; Weber pronounced Beethoven a madman; and Haydn said of a brother musician that 'he played the fiddle like a hog.' Liszt was particularly severe upon fellow-artistes. Some one was once playing to him a composition he evidently did not care for. 'What is that?' he asked. 'It is Bennett's *Maid of Orleans* Sonata,' was the reply. 'Ah,' said the virtuoso, 'what a pity that the original manuscript did not meet with the same fate as Joan.' In this connection a good story is told of the late Victor Masse. He was informed one day that a rival composer took every opportunity of declaring that his (Masse's) music was execrable. 'He maintains I have no talent,' said Masse; 'I always declare he has plenty. We both know we lie.' But perhaps better than this was the opinion of Wagner expressed by Offenbach. Wagner had just published his *Rienzi*, and off went a copy to Offenbach, with a request that he would say what he thought of it. Now Offenbach had previously read some of Wagner's

poems, and had made fun of them, a circumstance well known to Wagner. After some three weeks the score of *Rienzi* was returned to its composer, with a slip on which was written: 'Dear Wagner, your music is trash; *stick to poetry*.' This of course enraged Wagner greatly, and some months later he was out with one of his celebrated brochures denouncing the Jews. It was a fine opportunity for revenge—Offenbach being an Israelite—and the brochure was in the hands of Offenbach in no time. Two days elapsed, and Wagner had the pamphlet back. When he opened it, this was what he found written on the front page: 'Dear Wagner, your brochure is rot; *stick to music*.' One would have liked to see the composer of *Lohengrin* just at that moment. As a matter of fact, Wagner was rather unfortunate when he came into contact with his fellow-composers. Dr Hanslick of Vienna tells of having once asked Schumann how he got on with Wagner. 'Well,' he replied, 'Wagner is a great man, but I can't get on with him at all. He talks at such a rate, I can't get a word in edgewise.' Shortly after this, Hanslick met Wagner, and put a similar question to him about Schumann. 'Ah,' said Wagner, 'I can't get on with him at all. He just looks at me with a vacant stare and never says a word at all.' The story reminds one of a certain redoubtable editor's 'interview' with the late Emperor of Russia. The pressman was granted an 'audience,' and was told that he would be allowed just fifteen minutes. The fifteen minutes passed, and the editor's attention was called to the fact. 'But, your Majesty,' he remarked, 'you have not yet said anything.' 'No,' replied the Emperor; 'you haven't given me the chance.' The interviewer, like Wagner, had talked the whole of the time away!

Haydn, who was as full of mirth and sunshine as a child, very often had his jokes out in his music. When he first conducted his symphonies in London it was matter of concern to him that people—heavy diners, no doubt—sometimes fell asleep during the slow movements. At last an idea struck him in connection with the matter, and the so-called 'Surprise' Symphony was the result. In this work, just when everything has been going on quietly, the full orchestra comes in with a crash in a single chord which might have roused the Seven Sleepers themselves. 'There all the women will jump,' said the composer to a friend who chanced to call when the work was in progress. Concert-goers nowadays are too knowing to be startled in this way; but there are occasions when some of them do not fail to startle other people. Most readers have probably heard the story of the two ladies who were trying to settle a question in cookery during the playing of the *Tell* overture. They were talking loudly—for the overture is rather noisy—and suddenly, when there came a rest in the music, this was what a portion of the audience heard: 'We always fry ours in lard.' Something of the same kind once happened at St George's Chapel, Windsor, when Sir George Elvey had all his vocal and instrumental forces at work on the Hallelujah Chorus. Of course it was a couple of ladies again, and when the music ceased there came in tones distinctly audible the interesting announcement: 'Three and elevenpence at Whiteley's.' Mr Andrew Lang did not know what he was saying

when he declared that music is the enemy of conversation.

But we were speaking of Haydn and his musical jokes. He, too, like Rossini, delighted to have a 'rise' out of the amateur. During one of his visits to London he wrote an apparently easy sonata for piano and violin. He called it 'Jacob's Dream,' and sent it anonymously to an amateur who had a strong partiality for the upper notes of the violin. The enthusiast was quite charmed with the opening of the composition. 'Here,' said he, 'is a composer who thoroughly understands the instrument.' But as he found that he was compelled to ascend the ladder, going higher and higher without any chance of coming down again, the perspiration burst out upon his forehead, and he exclaimed: 'What sort of a composition can this be? The man knows nothing whatever about the violin.' The joke was better than that of Boccherini, who satisfied the ambition of Charles IV. to play the violin in a quartet, by writing a part having the same note throughout. Haydn was a great admirer of the fair sex, and some of his prettiest things were said about women. One specimen must suffice. The celebrated Mrs Billington was a great friend of his, and Sir Joshua Reynolds had painted her portrait. Haydn went to see the picture when it was finished. 'Yes,' he said to the artist, 'it is very good. But you have made one mistake: you have painted Mrs Billington listening to the angels, whereas the angels should be listening to her.'

Berlioz, the eminent French composer, had a caustic wit. He could not endure Bach, and he used to call Handel 'a big hog,' a 'musician of the stomach.' For this he was paid out by Mendelssohn, who declared that after touching a score of Berlioz, soap and hot water were necessary. Berlioz, however, had his musical hero, and that hero was Beethoven. Touch Beethoven irreverently, and his ire was kindled. There is a certain passage for the double basses in one of the master's scores which was at one time believed to be almost impossible of execution. Now Habeneck conducted a performance of this work in Paris, and gave the passage in question to the 'cellos. Berlioz, who was present, met Habeneck soon after, and asked him when he meant to give the passage as Beethoven intended it to be given. 'Never as long as I live,' said Habeneck. 'Well, we'll wait,' replied Berlioz; 'don't let it be long.'

Speaking of Beethoven, that master's humour was rather of the grim kind, resembling more the satire of Carlyle than anything else. Swift himself never made worse puns with more pleasure, or devised queerer spellings, or more miserable rhymes, or bestowed more nicknames on his friends. In one letter he remarks to his publisher that he can write nothing that is not *obligato*, having come into the world himself with an *obligato* accompaniment; and he can even descend to the joke of asking his friend Zmeskall not to *dis-card* him because he had called without a card of invitation. And there is a better card story than this—a real Carlyle specimen. The composer's brother had a little property of his own, and was very proud of it. One day he called on Beethoven, and left a card inscribed: 'Johann van Beethoven, land proprietor.' Next day he had it returned to him, written on the back:

'L. van Beethoven, brain proprietor.' The composer detested conventionalities of all kinds. He was once found using the candle-snuffers as a toothpick; and he left a good lodging for no other reason than that the landlord persisted in raising his hat to him.

He was fond of a practical joke, too, this genius of the 'rough hulk.' One of his lady admirers once sent begging for a lock of his hair, and got in return a tuft from a goat's beard. Sometimes he failed to see when the joke was turned against himself. He offended Hummel greatly by once asking him, after he had been playing for some time, when he was to begin in good earnest. The pianist naturally jumped up in a passion; but Beethoven only added to his offence by remarking to those present: 'Well, I thought Hummel had just been preluding.' In revenge for this insult, Hummel shortly after played Beethoven a trick. The latter always liked to have the last news from Berlin, and Hummel took advantage of this curiosity to write to him: 'The latest piece of news is the invention of a lantern for the blind.' Beethoven was completely taken in by this childish joke, repeated it to his acquaintances, and wrote to Hummel to demand full particulars of the remarkable invention. The management of his servants Beethoven found to be no joke, though he could be funny enough on that score too. Writing to Holz a note of invitation to dinner, he says of one of his domestics: 'Friday is the only day on which the old witch, who certainly would have been burned two hundred years ago, can cook decently, because on that day the devil has no power over her.' Nancy was 'too uneducated for a housekeeper,' and because she had been detected of telling a lie, Beethoven declared it was impossible she could make good soup! After all this, we are not surprised that Rochlitz should have described the impression he received from Beethoven as that of a very able man, reared on a desert island, and suddenly brought fresh into the world.

THE ATONEMENT OF THE VANGUARDS SKIPPER.

By WALTER WOOD, Author of No. 90's Last Torpedo.

'Boy!' roared the skipper of the *Vanguard*, 'bring some mugs o' tea, an' cheese an' biscuits; put the leg o' mutton an' the taties on, an' boil a puddin'. An' mind you mix the bakin'-powder in the dough, an' don't sprinkle it on the puddin' when you've boiled it, as you did last time. Then bake some busters, an' clear the cabin up, you lazy little rascal. An' be slick about it, if you don't want makin' lively wi' a rope's-end or a marlinspike. But, first of all, bring up my oilies an' sou'-wester, for the rain'll fall to-day fit to swamp us, an' the wind'll blow strong enough to rip the mains'l.'

The trembling little cabin-boy, cook, and general drudge dived below, and staggered up the iron ladder, through the hooded hole they called a hatch, bearing his master's yellow garments. He was clad in ragged trousers and a cotton shirt, and the growing wind from the east blew keenly on his shivering body.

The skipper, from his seat on the bulwarks,

cuffed him playfully on the head as he took over the oilskins, and the boy reeled into the mate, who was at the tiller. The mate, in turn, projected him, with a heavy foot, against the hatch, and asked him savagely what he meant by butting him in the waistcoat like that.

The boy growled like an injured cub, and the mate hurled part of a fish-trunk at his head as he dropped into the cabin without using the ladder.

'If I'd a spoke like that w'en I was young I should ha' bin skinned alive,' said the skipper. 'You see wot comes o' eddication' kids above their station. Eddication may 'elp a man to read the names o' ships, but not to catch more fish.'

The *Vanguard* was running home for a week, after two month's fishing with the Short Blue fleet, and, in anticipation of his periodical debauch ashore, the skipper was in jovial mood. At present he had one eye only, but very soon it was his intention to assume another, of glass, which he wore when in port, or paying calls of extra ceremony in the fleet. He was also intending to apply soap and water to his features, for the first time since he last sailed from home, so that when he stepped ashore, he should do so handsomely. Some of his delight found expression in a little song which he bellowed hoarsely, marking time approximately with a black and almost stemless pipe of clay.

'Sing ho! my lads; ye ho! my lads;
The *Vanguard*'s sailin' large an' free;
From regions far she'll cross the bar,
An' leave be'ind the ragin' sea.

'Then cheer, my boys—more beer, my boys;
We're 'eavin' on the mighty main;
No danger crossed, nor tempest-toss'd
Until we sail to sea again.'

'Chorus!' commanded the skipper; and by way of leading it he sang the verses over again, the mate joining cheerfully in, although he was under the necessity, being unable to sing at all, of speaking the lines, which he did very effectively, in a rumbling and unbroken bass.

'We're the only smack on the North Sea that's bin made po'try of,' the skipper said proudly.

'They were wrote by that newspaper chap in spectacles that came out wi' us last trip, weren't they?' asked the mate.

'The very man,' replied the skipper. 'E was a clever un, 'e was, if you like. Fancy workin' the *Vanguard* into a pome, like they work 'Allelujahs into 'ymns.'

The skipper put his pipe between his teeth, bowl downward, and waited for the mate, who appeared to be reflecting, to speak.

'E could write pomes,' observed the mate, after a pause, giving the tiller-ropes a gentle pull, 'but 'e couldn't stand a fishin'-smack. 'E told me 'e'd bin in gales in every ocean in the world, an' never turned a 'air; but that bit of a breeze the first day out rolled 'im up. 'E told me that night, as 'e wrapped 'isself in a sail on deck becoss 'e couldn't sleep below for fleas an' things, that 'e'd 'ad enough o' North Sea smacks to last 'im a lifetime; an' w'en I tumbled 'im an' 'is portinantly aboard the cutter for Billin'sgate, 'e said 'e thought 'e'd be able to see the romance o' the water a vast deal better from the shore than 'e'd ever seen it on it.'

'E wrote the lines in bed at 'ome,' explained

the skipper. 'Leastways, so 'e told me in a letter wot he sent, an' wot the mission doctor read for me. My goodness! 'ow that doctor luffed w'en I told 'im o' the man's surprise w'en 'e knew there was no forks or spoons aboard, an' that we didn't use table-cloths. All the same, 'e was very clever—an' very 'ardy. You mind 'ow he used to come on deck them raw mornin's an' get five or six pails o' salt water chucked over 'im—an' no clothes on. It gave me shivers even to watch 'im.'

'Ay,' the mate admitted, 'e was tough an' plucky—an' free-anded too. You remember 'ow 'e came back from the mission ship, an' brought us just a stone o' bacca? I've got some o' mine left yet.'

'It wouldn't be a bad spec' to bring one like 'im with us every trip,' the skipper said reflectively. 'It pays, an' it expands the mind too. You see, 'e learned a lot about fishin', an' I learned that stuff don't walk into a newspaper office an' put itself into type, as I allus thought it did.'

'Aren't you going to get a reef or two in the mains'?' asked the mate, after looking carefully at the lowering sky. 'It's goin' to blow; there'll be a rare smart breeze afore long.'

'Reef be blowed,' the skipper answered, rising and putting on his oilskins and sou'-wester, for the rain was now beginning to fall heavily. 'I'm jint owner an' skipper o' the *Vanguard*, an' if the canvas goes, so much the better for the sailmakers. As for losses, there are none for me; an' as for wife or family, chick or kin, there's never a one o' mine. If the canvas goes—the skipper swelled with the pride of ownership—'oo pays but me? an' if I go with it, 'oo cares? Boy—he drained his mug—'another pot o' tea, an' put more treacle in it an' less grease. You're bilin' that mutton an' taties together, as I told you, an' not wi' the tea, as you did a week since?'

'I'm bilin' of 'em just as you said, so as to flavour the taties as you like 'em.'

'An' you're bakin' the busters proper?'

The boy nodded.

'Fetch one up, an' let me see,' commanded the skipper suspiciously. 'You're such a cunmin' little rascal, you'd say anything.'

The boy descended to the stove and brought up a cake as a sample. It was streaky with the dirt that he had kneaded into it from the cabin table, and tough and leaden with bad cooking and want of skill; but the skipper looked upon it as a triumph, and gave the boy an approving pat on the head which almost knocked him down.

'Do 'em all like that,' shouted the skipper encouragingly, 'an' you shall have a piece o' one for tea—an' that's a sight more nor they give you in the work'us' w're you come from.'

The wind sang through the rigging of the *Vanguard*, and swept out of the foot of the mainsail in a cold and steady blast. The sky was settling into an unvaried dome of gray, and the colour of the leaden sea was broken only by the angry crests from which the seething foam was whipped. In that drear waste of sea and sky the *Vanguard* plunged along, now rising until half her hull was clear of the water and showed the perfect symmetry of her lines; now falling until her bowsprit was buried and a deluge of water swept her glistening deck. Every part of her in that hard, cold light was perfectly defined, and the figures on her deck stood out in sharp relief.

'It's goin' to be a dirty night,' resumed the skipper; an' there'll be some mischief done afore the sun shines again. But if it blew six times as 'ard as it's going to, I'd carry every rag I've got. This breeze is too fair to let any of it be missed. If we go on as we're goin' now we should be on the safe side o' the *St Nicholas* afore to-morrow noon. I'm goin' below to feed, an' you can come shortly. W'en I've done I'll see if I can rouse the snorin' beggars by the boiler.'

A heavy squall struck the *Vanguard* as the skipper put his foot on the ladder to descend. The smack went over until her lee bulwarks were under water, but her rigging, spars, and canvas held staunchly.

'Didn't I tell you it was comin'?' said the skipper, proud of the fulfilment of his prophecy. 'But she's the tightest craft afloat, an' things of that sort won't 'urt'er. Lots o' smacks would ha' gone down under a strain like that. They're pretty strong puffs, so I'll send Joseph up to give you a 'and at the tiller.'

He went below, and piloted his way to the spot where the rest of the crew were sleeping on the floor, near the furnace-box of the little vertical boiler. They had cast themselves down in their clothes as soon as they had got the *Vanguard* clear of the fleet, and were heedless of the frenzied motion of the vessel in the rising gale.

The skipper kicked the sleeper who was nearest to him, one whose curly hair shone like dull gold in the light from the furnace, and whose strong white teeth showed faintly through his parted lips. He was resting soundly, with his head pillowed on his right arm, but awoke as soon as he heard the skipper's voice.

'All right, gov'nur,' he said, sitting up and yawning. 'I'll go on deck. I'm feelin' peckish; will dinner be ready soon?'

'Lord love 'em, allus thinkin' o' their bellies,' said the skipper, addressing an imaginary listener.

'I've touched nothing since breakfast, skipper, and that's a sight of a time since. Dinner was put off so 's we could get away for 'ome. It must be three now.'

'Never mind; the later you get it the more fashionable,' said the skipper. 'The Queen doesn't get 'ers till bed-time, they say, an' sometimes I don't get mine till the day after—w'en I'm very fashionable indeed. So 'op on deck.'

The skipper was in the mood to dine snugly, and so he shouted to the mate to clap the hatch on, which the mate did. Then the skipper took off his oilskins, and having ordered the boy to wipe for him the space on the floor in front of the fire, he sat down, opened his pocket-knife, and, using his fingers as a fork, attacked a heap of potatoes and boiled mutton in a tin dish placed upon his knees.

The skipper felt that this was luxury indeed. His fire roared cheerfully, the hatch was secured, and a little oil-lamp swung above his head and threw its feeble beams upon him. A mug of tea was beside him, and a buster in the oven was keeping hot for his consumption.

'This,' said the skipper, stirring his tea with the blade of his knife, 'this is wot I call comfort—the wind 'owlin' outside; the water thumpin' on deck, tryin' to get in; the 'atch on; an' the lamp shinin' in the darkness like—I don't know wot. Boy,' he added suddenly, looking at the cook, who

was seated on a locker, watching, with professional pleasure, the relish with which his patron and employer fed upon the victuals he had cooked, 'isn't there some po'try wi' a light'ouse in it?'

'Let the lower lights be burnin',
Send a gleam across the wave,
Some poor faintin', strugglin' seaman
You may rescue, you may save,'

the boy quoted promptly.

'Ah,' said the skipper, poisoning a potato on the end of his knife, 'e was a fine man wot wrote them lines; they make you feel as if you'd like to sit on the stove itself, so 's to get all the comfort you can. It's awful to think o' the sufferin's o' shipwrecked men, wi' the cold seas washin' over 'em. We ought to be thankful we're so comfortable and 'appy, boy. Are you 'appier 'ere nor you were in the work'us?'

'A sight,' said the boy unhesitatingly.

'An' you'll not be runnin' away first minute you touch the quay?'

'No fear,' replied the boy. 'I've had enough o' the work'us an' patten' on the 'ead by red-nosed guardians. There was one on 'em allus used to drag me out as a prize boy, to show visitors 'ow they tamed wild little fellers in that place. "This is one o' the wickedest imps we've ever 'ad in the 'Ouse," he said to some ladies as 'e was showin' round; "but the system's curin' 'im; isn't it, my little man?" I 'ated to be shown off like that, so I threw 'is 'and off my 'ead, an' kicked 'im on the shins.'

'An' that's w'y they sent you out to me, isn't it?' queried the skipper.

'Yes,' admitted the boy; 'they said they'd pack me off to a skipper wot ud either make me do as I was told or break my back.'

'Ah,' said the skipper, drinking from his mug, 'they said that, did they?'

'Yes; an' Red Nose, as we called 'im, said 'e 'oped there'd be a gale that ud carry me off, an' all such varmint.'

'E was a nice Christian guardian, 'e was,' said the skipper placidly. 'I'd just like 'im to be wi' us to-night; it ud knock all notions o' them sort out o' 'is 'ead, if e's got any stomach. So the guardians seemed to think I was a bad lot?'

'Red Nose said you was the cruellest feller un'ung,' answered the boy readily and innocently, 'an' that 'e'd bet you'd done many a nipper to death in your time wi' rope's-ends an' 'and-spikes.'

'Red Nose was a liar, then,' rejoined the skipper, with a suspicion of irritation. 'Wot I did was only wot was done by every skipper in the fleet, so it couldn't be wrong. An' it was only done to correct the little nippers wot wouldn't listen to reason an' obey orders. I done nothing wrong to you; 'ave I, boy?'

'No; you've treated me fair an' square, as between man an' man; an' only knocked me down a time or two, an' thrown a fish-trunk at me.'

'But I've given you a old oily frock, an' let you put treacle in your tea,' said the skipper extenuatingly; 'an' I've let you go on board the Mission smacks to sing an' pray, although I don't 'old wi' that sort o' thing myself.'

'They tell me on the Mission boats you used to be a pretty 'ot un,' continued the boy, encouraged by his master's amiable mood—'got drunk on the

copers, an' sold the gear an' spars from the boss's smack for rum and brandy. An' they say you once set fire to a smack that wasn't yours, an' lost 'er—you was drunk.'

The skipper found a strange pleasure in listening to these details, as showing that in the past he was a man of spirit and importance in the fleet, a person to be reckoned with and accounted for. For the moment he thought of himself as some other individual in whose doings he chanced to be especially concerned.

'But I've reformed,' said the skipper. 'I'm nice and gentle now since the Mission started. If I was to go on poundin' kids, I might get nabbed by the perlice, an' sent to prison. The Mission's very watchful after little boys.'

'I shall get to be a Mission skipper some day,' said the *Vanguard's* boy, and wear a brass-buttoned jacket an' a swell cap, an' take ladies an' gentlemen out to see the fishin', an' sing an' pray wi' the smacksmen.'

'You've got a mighty fine check,' said the skipper, pausing in the act of raising his mug. He turned to look at the boy, who, showing dimly in the gloomy light, with his bare feet and arms crossed, and his ample trousers secured above his cotton shirt by a leather strap in the form of a shoulder-belt, looked an unpromising subject for promotion.

The skipper would have pursued the conversation, but another heavy squall struck the *Vanguard*, and the boy was thrown violently against him from the locker.

'Dash you,' said the skipper, as if the boy had collided with him purposely, 'w'y d'ye come in a 'eap like that on me? You can pick them taters an' mutton up, and make your dinner off 'em. But first rouse up the lazy beggars by the boiler, an' tell 'em to go on deck.'

The boy obeyed, and three drowsy oil-skinned men filed past and climbed the ladder, the skipper telling them sternly to clap the hatch on, and not disturb his comfort.

'An' now,' he said, 'before those idle fellers get their dinners, I'll 'ave a smoke an' a drink o' whisky to keep the cold out.'

He smoked long, and he drank hard. The boy had successfully chased and captured the potatoes as they rolled about the floor, and had eaten them with a healthy appetite, accounting himself fortunate in the accident to the skipper's tin, for these vegetables were soaked in gravy, a luxury which he would not, in the ordinary course of things, have known.

Squall after squall attacked the *Vanguard*, but the skipper kept below, and hugg'd the fire and his whisky. The boy had wedged himself firmly in a corner on the floor, and was sleeping, but warily, with one eye open.

Once or twice the hatch had been pushed back, and the face of the mate, streaming with rain and sea-water, peered into the warm mephitic depths, and his hoarse voice asked if the skipper meant to close-reef the smack.

'No,' roared the skipper, 'not a reef, not a inch.'

'The sticks can't stand it long,' protested the mate.

'Then let 'em go, an' every rope wi' 'em. I won't budge if every spar an' bit o' sail goes. I've allus carried on afore, an' I'm not goin' to

show the wite feather now, not at my time o' life. Leave that to timber ships and foreigners. If you're afeard, you can give the tiller to Charley, an' come an' 'ide yourself below.'

For answer the mate jammed on the hatch again viciously, and rejoined his comrades astern.

The skipper dropped his pipe, and held on closely to the bottle. Darkness fell, and yet he made no sign of going on deck to see how the *Vanguard* was behaving and how his hungry crew were faring in the chill October night.

The cook had long since fallen asleep entirely; the potatoes and the mutton were past eating by any but smacksmen or sailors of the mercantile marine, and the busters, which had been put in front of the donkey furnace to keep warm, had been caught by the fire, and burned to cinders. Only the tea remained unaltered. It was impossible to make that worse.

The skipper was at last awakened by a ringing cry of 'Water's coming,' and he sprang to his feet as the hatch was thrust back, and the mate tried to drop below for shelter, the others struggling with him.

There was a stunning crash on the *Vanguard's* deck, and an awful shout which rose above the sound of the wave that broke on board. A deluge of water descended to the cabin. The floor was flooded, and as the *Vanguard* gave a deep pitch forward, the water rushed against the stove, and with a hissing noise the fire went out.

The mate tumbled into the cabin, with his back broken by the fall of water. The skipper, sober and active now, picked him up in his strong arms and put him on a locker.

'You done it this time,' moaned the mate, 'you was a bit too rash for once, an' would carry on too long. We should ha' been close-reefed two hours since. Yes, I'm done for, an' I've a wife an' child at 'ome.'

'God 'elpin' me, I'll see to them,' said the skipper, conscience-stricken. 'But, look up, Dan; you're only a bit banged. 'Ere, boy, see to Dan wile I go on deck; there's nob'dy at the tiller.'

He snatched his oilskin frock, and hurried into it before going up the ladder. When he reached the deck he saw that the mizzen-mast had snapped off almost by the board, and was dragging with its wreckage of rigging and sail alongside; and the mainsail was split to ribbons that were flapping wildly.

'Charlie—Arthur—Joseph!' he shouted, but no answer came. The three had been swept overboard by the mass of water which had killed the mate and destroyed the mast. No one knew better than he how hopeless was the thought of rescue. Even if the sea had not crushed out the lives of the men, their oilies, jerseys, stockings, and ponderous boots would have dragged them down into the depths as the trawl-beam drags the net.

The skipper was a man of giant strength and bulldog courage. His strength was greater now than ever in the face of this great peril, and his courage reached its ultimate development. He gripped the tiller, and with a mighty effort lashed it for the moment hard-a-port, so that the *Vanguard* would run before the gale.

Then he shouted to the boy to hand him up a hatchet, and with the weapon he cleared the wreckage from the side, striking resistless blows.

Having done this, he released the helm again, and set himself to do, as best he could, the work of a whole crew.

The moon rose, and rode in a wild, hard sky, and the crippled *Vanguard* scudded onward like some phantom ship, no spark of fire and no light about her or within. The swishing water below had reached and quenched the boiler fire, and the lamp had flickered out for want of oil.

In the dog-hole of a cabin, now waist-deep in water, the shivering boy held grimly to his charge, wondering why he kept so still and made no effort on his own behalf; but at last his strength failed; they rolled together to the floor, and the water washed completely over them at every roll. A ray of the moon shone down the hatch, and the light falling on the mate's pale face, a nameless horror seized the boy, and he hurried upon deck and clung to the broken mast.

'Ow's Dan?' cried the skipper.

'Dead,' returned the boy. 'E's killed an' drowned.'

'Go below, or you'll be carried overboard,' was all the skipper answered.

'I'll stay 'ere,' replied the boy tremblingly. 'I daren't be alone wi' 'im.'

'Then fetch your oily an' some clothes out o' my locker, an' put 'em on, or you'll be frozen stiff.'

'I'd rather stay 'ere, skipper, an' freeze.'

'Go an' get 'em'—the skipper spoke firmly, but not unkindly—'you needn't be afeard; I'm only a yard or two away, an' Dan'll not 'urt you.'

The unwilling boy obeyed, going fearfully below, and getting his own soaked oily frock, and a thick coat and a heavy jersey from the skipper's private locker.

'Put 'em on, jersey first, an' lash yourself to the stump o' the mast, an' we'll both get safe into Yarmouth Roads, w'en all's said an' done. I've known worse things nor this 'appen at sea.'

The boy obeyed again, and soon he was fast to the broken mizzen, with the jersey round him, the coat, reaching to his ankles, buttoned up, and the oilskin over all. His feet and head were bare, and the wind sang through the garments' ample folds, but the boy was warm, for him. Being drowsy, he fell asleep, and the skipper kept his watch alone.

All through that night the scarecrow *Vanguard* ran before the gale, the skipper at the struggling tiller and the boy asleep, feeling not and heeding not the rolling and the pitching of the smack.

When day broke the skipper peered ahead for sight of land. The air was clear no longer; a thick mist hung about him, and the near horizon showed him nothing but the crests of hurrying waves. At times he heard above the noise of wind and water the sirens of steamers, hoarse and mournful, and once he shot across the bows of a black collier lunging north. It was an escape by a hair; a moment later, and the steamer would have cut him down, but he went his way unmoved, and the collier, with wild leapings, disappeared in the clammy rolling mists.

So far as the skipper could tell, the smack was getting near the Norfolk coast. With clear daylight, shattered though he was, he would have feared nothing, for his strength remained within his bones and sinews, and he held the mastery of

the tiller still; but in the growing heaviness that menaced more than any storm, he could do nothing more than blindly hold his course and keep the craft before the wind.

Sea after sea had swept her deck, and poured into her hold and cabin; the hatchway had been shorn level with the deck, the gear had been swept overboard, and the spare trawl-beam had been dashed away, carrying with it the port bulwarks. Only the hold packed with empty fish-trunks kept the smack afloat in that wild turmoil. Each time she rolled the skipper waited for her groaning sides to rend asunder, and at each long shuddering pitch he expected that the ballast would burst up through the decks. But his resolution never faltered. In his rough, uncultured imagination he likened himself to one who fought against crushing odds, a pigmy warring with the elements, a shattered sodden craft pitted against the hungry waters of the merciless North Sea. The fierce joy of conquest filled him, while the lust of life surged up within. But above all there arose the wish to save the little fellow who throughout the night had slept in heavy stupor near him, at times buried in the seas that came on board. The skipper argued vaguely that he had sinned, that expiation was demanded of him, and that atonement could be made, first by saving the boy, and next by giving up his worldly goods to those who were widowed through his stubbornness. This latter he would do when he had steered the *Vanguard* over the bar, and had run her into the safety of the sheltering river.

The *Vanguard* gave a wild leap onward. There was a heavy grinding crash; her bows were crushed in, the jib and foresail, which had held valiantly throughout the gale, fell limply down as the foremast broke and tumbled forward with its flapping strips of canvas.

The *Vanguard* was aground upon the Crosby Sands, and the seas were sweeping in procession over her. The skipper was dashed to the deck by the impact, and for a moment he lay stunned. When he recovered he saw that the boy had been aroused by the shock.

The smack was steadier now, and being embedded in the sand forward, she rose and fell mostly to the stern. A high wave had carried her well on to the bank, and the seas spent most of their power before they reached her.

The run before the gale was ended, and there was a respite so long as the strained timbers held together.

Undaunted still, the skipper set to work to see if he could save his craft and his companion. The water from the hold and cabin was streaming from the *Vanguard's* yawning planks forward, and soon it was but waist-deep below. The skipper descended the ladder, groped his way to his locker, and drew forth an unopened and undamaged bottle of brandy. He broke the neck by knocking it against a beam, and took a long draught of the raw spirit. Then he went on deck, and poured some down the boy's throat, and rubbed some on his hands and face.

'Cheer up,' he shouted; 'the fog'll lift soon, an' they'll see us from the shore.'

The boy, reviving, answered: 'They see us now,' and he pointed landward.

The fog had lifted suddenly, and the skipper

saw that ashore they were launching the lifeboat. The wind, too, was falling.

'Fog an' sea goin',' said the skipper cheerily; 'w'y, boy, we'll live to save the *Vanguard* yet. The lifeboat'll take us off, an' we'll get a tug to-morrow to tow 'er round to the 'arbour.'

'I'm frozen stiff, skipper; won't you unleash me?' said the boy.

The skipper set him free. The boy, numb and cold, fell to the deck, unable to move.

'Bless me,' exclaimed the skipper, 'e's like a carcase o' 'merican mutton. 'E wants rubbin' back to life.'

He seized the boy, and rubbed and kneaded him into a semblance of a glow. Then he seated himself on the deck, and hugged the boy close to him with one arm, and clung to the stump of the mizzen with the other. The boy was overcome again by his stupor, and fell asleep.

The lifeboat thrashed her way out to the *Vanguard*, sent along by fishermen themselves, who knew just what had happened to her, and the sort of night that those on board had spent. She went as close up to the *Vanguard* as she dare, keeping off the dangerous fringe of the sands.

'Smack ahoy!' shouted the coxswain, raising his burly figure in the boat, each leg held in a comrade's unyielding embrace. 'Catch the line, an' one o' you come aboard quick; then we'll cast again for t'other.'

He threw a rope with unerring aim, and the skipper caught it.

'Quick!' the coxswain roared, 'afore you drop to bits—you're in a bad way. What's the smack—*Vanguard*, ain't it? We can 'ardly tell.'

'Ay,' shouted the skipper. 'Aul in when I say "Ready."'

He made the rope fast round the boy's waist. 'W'en I say "Go," you've got to tumble overboard, an' they'll 'ave you in the lifeboat in a jiffy. Then they'll send for me.'

'All right, skipper; I'm not afeard.'

'Sharp! there's a 'eavy sea a-comin',' the coxswain shouted warningly.

'Ready!' sang the skipper.—'Go!' he added to the boy. He pushed him overboard, and the boatmen dragged the little figure through the creamy seas, and the coxswain's strong arms drew him breathless into the boat.

The skipper looked seaward, and saw the deadly liquid wall advancing—the last mad charge of his relentless foe.

He had seen too many hills of death like that to misconstrue its meaning. He rose to his full height, majestic in his last stand, and steadied himself against the jagged mast.

'Tell 'em ashore to give the insurance money to the widders, and the ten pun in the bank to the boy.'

The crew heard him, and understood afterwards.

'But we'll bring you off w'en this sea's past,' shouted the coxswain, as the lifeboat met the wave, bows on.

She rose up almost vertically as she headed into it, then ran down the other side in a smother of spray.

They did not see the skipper wave his last good-bye, nor did they hear him say, 'I done wrong, but I'm not afeard now; I'm payin' for

it. Don't bother about me; see to the widders an' the boy.'

The sea came on. It broke in a towering cloud above the *Vanguard's* stern, and crumbled around the dissolving smack. The strained timbers were rent asunder once for all, and the skipper was carried into deep water.

When the wave had spent itself the rescuers gazed for a moment at the wreckage; then, knowing what had happened, they bent to their oars, and the lifeboat swept across the bar and entered peaceful waters.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

OUR national art treasures have, through the munificence of various donors, been much increased of late years; but perhaps the most valuable addition of all is that which has just accrued to the nation under the will of the late Lady Wallace. Sir Richard Wallace owned what was generally considered to be the finest private collection of art treasures in the world, and he often spoke of its ultimate disposition, but died before any definite arrangement was decided upon. His widow, it is believed, has only carried out his expressed wish in bequeathing this wonderful collection of art objects and pictures to the nation, which may be roughly calculated to have a value of about twomillions sterling. The pictures include examples by Gainsborough, Hoppner, Lawrence, Romney, Sir J. Reynolds, and Wilkie. Among the Spanish pictures are no fewer than eleven by Murillo and eight by Velasquez. The Flemish section includes eleven by Rubens, six by Van Dyck, and five by Teniers. Among the French pictures are two by Claude, eleven by Watteau, twenty-two by Greuze, and fifteen by Meissonier; while the Dutch examples comprise eleven pictures by Rembrandt and eleven by Cuyp; and the Italian two Titians and seventeen Canalettos. In addition to the pictures there is the collection of old French armour, Sèvres china, snuff-boxes, miniatures, and other valuables too numerous to mention. There are but two conditions attached to this magnificent present to the nation. The first is that the government shall provide in central London a suitable building to contain the collection, which shall be styled the 'Wallace Collection,' and the other is that the late Sir Richard Wallace's secretary shall be one of its trustees.

A few years ago a Norwegian engineer, Rosendahl by name, devised a process by which peat can be carbonised and converted into a kind of coal. This process consists in heating the peat in close retorts to two hundred and fifty degrees centigrade and maintaining it at that heat for about seven hours. By this treatment the peat is robbed of its moisture and reduced in bulk, whilst its heat-giving capacity remains unaltered. The production of this peat-coal is becoming quite an important industry in Norway, and it is being sold there at four shillings and ninepence per ton, as against about four times that price for ordinary coal. The new fuel is said to be suitable for foundry purposes. Its cost of production is about half-a-crown a ton, and as we have in Britain many moors with large deposits of peat,

we shall doubtless soon hear of the establishment of fuel works in our own country.

Mr Matthew Webb's lecture at the Society of Arts on gesso will call attention to a minor means of embellishment which, although very old, is by no means familiar to the multitude. It is a kind of cross between painting and modelled relief, and in skilful hands the most beautiful effects are possible by its aid. Let us take, for example, the ornamentation of a panel. The sketch is roughly made on the flat surface and then by means of a brush charged with a half-liquid, half-plastic compound which very quickly becomes dry and hard, the image of the thing drawn is gradually built up in relief. Mr Webb showed that from time immemorial gesso had been used to cover wood, and that it had also been employed to give surface-finish before colouring to stone carved effigies—examples of both descriptions of work being found in the South Kensington Museum, at Westminster Abbey and the Temple Church. The revival of this beautiful 'byway of art,' as Mr Webb called it, will be interesting to students and amateurs, and we believe that those who wish to practise it can obtain the necessary materials through the usual channels.

The saltiness of sea-water varies greatly, according to results of analysis of water from different seas, &c., compiled by M. Henri Léon. Beginning with the Atlantic, there is found to be in every one thousand grammes of water thirty-two of saline matter. In the Mediterranean, which has comparatively few rivers to freshen it, the saline matter amounts to forty-three per thousand grammes of water. A decrease is found in the Black Sea, where the figure is seventeen. But in the Caspian it rises to sixty-two, and in the Sea of Azov as high as one hundred and eighteen. The amount of common salt (chloride of sodium) as a constituent of the saline matter also varies considerably. The sea generally is saltier at a distance from land than it is near the shore; but the Mediterranean is an exception to the rule for the reason already given. Salt lakes, such as the Dead Sea, often contain far more salt than the ocean, the Dead Sea being ten times saltier than the Atlantic.

Professor John Milne, in a discourse at the Royal Institution on 'Recent Advances in Seismology,' remarked that up till quite recently an earthquake was regarded as a transient phenomenon lasting, perhaps, only a few seconds, or at most a few minutes; but now, by the aid of the seismograph, it was possible to observe all the minor movements and tremors which preceded and followed an earthquake. In Japan, where upwards of one thousand earthquakes per annum were recorded, numbers of residents were studying seismology, and one result of the knowledge which they had acquired was that the construction of their buildings had been so altered that when an earthquake shock occurred the loss arising was greatly mitigated. The Japanese Government had very wisely encouraged this thirst for knowledge by subsidising a committee to carry on experiments throughout the country with regard to earthquake phenomena. An earthquake could be felt at any spot on the earth, said the lecturer; and from his residence in the Isle of Wight, by aid of improved instruments, he had been able to take records of two of

the most destructive calamities of the kind which had taken place in Japan last year.

Some interesting particulars relating to the homing pigeon were recently published in an article in the *Badminton Magazine*, from which we learn that the price of the birds varies from a sovereign up to sixty pounds for a proved racer or a stud bird. Pigeons have been known to fly five hundred miles and more in a day, birds belonging to fanciers in and about London having accomplished the journey from Thurso, N.B., in June last, the winning bird flying five hundred and one miles, with an average velocity of 1454 yards per minute for the entire distance. With the wind at its back a pigeon will often accomplish more than sixty miles an hour, and, strange to say, they will make good speed with the wind dead against them. Under such conditions birds have been known to fly at seven hundred yards per minute.

At the museum of the Royal United Service Institution there has lately been exhibited some most interesting relics of General Gordon, of whom it has been said that 'he was in many respects the greatest soldier England has produced.' Among the articles shown is his famous yellow jacket, conferred upon Gordon for his invaluable services to China, he being the only European who has ever received that much-coveted decoration. More interesting than the jacket itself is the autograph letter from Gordon, which is shown in the same case with it, and which explains the origin of the yellow jacket decoration. From this it appears that when the Mingo, or Manchurian dynasty, conquered China, the leader of the invaders, fearing assassination, clothed forty of his bodyguard in yellow like himself. The precaution became unnecessary, but the custom of wearing the yellow jackets continued, and subsequently took the form of a military decoration. No mandarins can wear the yellow garment; no one else but the emperor and the forty chosen ones. 'The Chinese tried hard,' writes General Gordon, 'to prevent my having it; but I said either the yellow jacket or nothing, and at last they yielded.'

The American bison or buffalo has been almost exterminated through the greed of hunters; but a herd of twenty owned by the Island Improvements Company is kept on Antelope Island, in the Great Salt Lake, under conditions which it is hoped will lead to their increase. The island is thirty miles long by six wide, and is virtually given up to the animals, who graze there in a semi-wild state. During the past year four calves were born, and the future progress of this curious animal colony will be watched with great interest. A herd of bisons is also kept in Yellowstone Park.

It will be remembered that Dr Koch, the eminent bacteriologist, recently went to Cape-town to institute an inquiry into the nature of rinderpest, with a view to combating the progress of that terrible disease among the cattle. The report which he has issued is of a highly satisfactory nature. By means of a mixture of serum and virulent rinderpest-blood he was able to protect several animals to such an extent that they were subsequently able to withstand an injection of 20 cm. of rinderpest-blood, a ten-thousandth part of which is a fatal dose. It is

important to note that only 20 cm. of such serum are required to render one animal immune, and therefore a litre of this liquid suffices for fifty head of cattle. Another important fact is that the bile of an animal which has died of rinderpest will protect healthy cattle from contagion. The report concludes with the following remarks: 'Rinderpest can be eradicated with but little difficulty and within a comparatively short time by putting these methods into practice. In infected parts nearly every case of rinderpest supplies a greater or less quantity of vaccine for those animals which are still healthy. I cannot but urge upon you the importance of bringing this method immediately to the notice of those cattle-owners whose animals are suffering from or threatened by the disease.'

It will come as a matter for surprise to many to learn that the glass of which bottles is made will under certain conditions be dissolved by the liquid stored in such vessels. M. Lavouroix has, according to *Invention*, been making an investigation into the subject, and quotes a curious case which may possibly have suggested the inquiry. A certain wealthy man bought in France some rare and very costly wines in casks, a sample from each cask being submitted to him by the wine merchant. The precious liquor was in due course racked off and bottled, and when some days later it was served at table the owner detected a strange unpleasant taste that was certainly not apparent in the samples originally submitted to and approved by him. Bottle after bottle was opened, and all were found to be similarly affected. Then came an action at law, on the ground that the wine sold did not correspond with the samples exhibited, and bottles of the wine were brought into court. It was then seen, apparently for the first time, that the glass of the bottles had become opaque. These, with other bottles of the same manufacture which had never contained wine, were handed to a chemist for examination, who found that the opaque bottles had lost a part of their lime, potash, and soda, which had been taken up by the wine, and formed compounds rendering it utterly unfit to drink.

The costliest book ever compiled is now in course of issue by the United States Government, the work being an official history of the War of Rebellion. Up to the present time nearly half a million of money has been absorbed on account of this stupendous literary production, which will consist, when finished, of one hundred and twelve volumes. About half this sum goes to printers and binders, the rest being expended in salaries, stationery, rent, and for the purchase of records. It is expected that the book will be completed in about three years' time, and that its total cost will then amount to six hundred thousand pounds. The history of the war will be illustrated by plates, maps, plans, and photographs.

Those who are not old enough to remember the great meteor swarm of 1866 will have a very faint idea of the marvellous exhibition which is in store for them in November 1899, unless unhappily the display be obscured by clouds. Every thirty-three years has this crowd of meteors appeared; and, according to Leverrier's hypothesis, they first entered the solar system in 126 A.D. as a globular cluster. In a lecture on the approach-

ing return of the phenomenon, Dr Storey recently gave at the Royal Institution a history of these meteors, pointing out that they only become visible when they enter the earth's atmosphere, when they become incandescent in consequence of the great resistance offered by the air to their rapid motion. Owing to this motion little can be learned about them save the direction in which they move. Those that enter our atmosphere are mostly burned up, while others are deflected from their course, and thus suffer alteration in their orbits and periodic times. The lecturer stated his belief that more precise information about the November meteors might be secured by photographic means, since a camera directed towards the region of the sky where the meteors were known to be might reveal more than was visible to the eye. The use of rapid dry plates, which has revolutionised photography and made a photographic chart of the heavens possible, was not dreamt of at the time these meteors last appeared.

'The Prevention of Fires due to the Leakage of Electricity' was the title of an important paper read before the Society of Arts, London, by Mr Frederick Bathurst, who grouped the conditions under which such accidents might occur into three heads—imperfect insulation, imperfect conductivity, and bad workmanship. He condemned the practice of enclosing electric light wires in wooden casing or in ordinary iron piping, and advocated as the best and safest system continuous tubes or conduits of insulating material. Such tubes could be made to traverse the walls of a building, being installed at the time of erection, the wires being subsequently drawn through them. Such a system would meet the various conditions of safe and perfect wiring.

Mr J. D. Meudell, of the Melbourne Stock Exchange, calls attention in the *Gippsland Miners' Standard* to the now neglected goldfield of Woodspoint, within two days' journey of Melbourne. The district has a past record in gold-finding, for between 1864 and 1871, Woodspoint, Gaffneys Creek, Matlock, and Big River yielded gold of a value of £1,144,743. Unfortunately its prospects were somewhat ruined by the company promoter, by the scramble attendant on merely alluvial mining, and more modern methods not having had a fair trial. Mr Meudell says that the mining investor who wishes to understand the regularity, richness, and formation of a diorite dyke should visit Woodspoint and go through some of the miners' holdings. There are plenty of small and easily-worked reefs to be had, with wood and water in abundance. After being neglected for thirty years, there are signs that this district will again be worked by modern methods which have yielded such good results at Coolgardie and elsewhere. A correspondent who lived at Woodspoint thirty years ago confirms Mr Meudell's statement in every particular.

The Imperial Oil-lighting Company is exhibiting a novel method of illuminating public and private buildings by paraffin, which is served to various fixed lamps throughout the premises by piping from a central source of supply. The necessary fittings, which are said to be not more costly than those peculiar to gas, comprise a tank to hold the paraffin, which may be fixed either inside or outside the house, a regulator, and

pipes to carry the oil to the lamps. Of these the regulator is perhaps the most important, for it adjusts the flow of oil from the tank according to its consumption in the lamps. It is so arranged that the supply-pipe from the oil-tank is shut off by a little vessel full of quicksilver when supply exceeds demand, the quicksilver receding from the tube when a fresh charge of oil is needed. The expense of this system of lighting is said to be about one-sixth that of lighting by coal-gas—at the price per thousand now common in London. The system can be seen in action at the offices of the company, 43 Cannon Street, London.

All the world knows how, when the brave and devoted Dr Livingstone passed away on his knees in that grass hut at Old Chitambo, to the south of Bangweolo, his sorrowing followers embalmed his body and carried it through swamp and desert and hostile tribes to Zanzibar, whence it was wafted to England to be laid in Westminster Abbey. He had coveted a forest grave in his lifetime, 'to lie in the still, still forest, and no hand ever disturb my bones.' But his heart was buried in Africa, where it had been during the greater part of his active lifetime, and lies under a Mpundu tree at Old Chitambo. The late E. J. Glave discovered and photographed the tree, but it appears that the tablet sent out by Mr and Mrs A. L. Bruce for the purpose of marking this sacred place was affixed to a tree about six miles away from the correct spot, and was afterwards stolen by a slave caravan. Mr Glave found the bark of the real tree pared off for a space of about 2½ feet, and this inscription cut into the hard, solid wood: 'Dr Livingstone, May 4th, 1873. Yazuzu, Muiasere, Vehopea.' A later explorer, Mr Poulett Weatherley, having circumnavigated Bangweolo, confirms Livingstone's survey; and, after some difficulty, he found the Livingstone tree on the right bank of the Luwe, and regretted to see that it was suffering from decay. He rightly suggests that some more durable method of marking the spot where Livingstone died be adopted ere it be too late.

Most readers of *Chambers's Journal* will remember the time when the chrysanthemums most commonly seen in gardens and greenhouses were comparatively small plants, and bore flowers greatly inferior to the splendid blooms now quite usual. But Japan is justly called the 'land of the chrysanthemum'; and we can hardly wonder that the flower plays a prominent part in Japanese life (the noblest knightly order in Japan is 'The Supreme Order of the Chrysanthemum') when we are informed by a correspondent who was present at an imperial garden party at Tokyo last November that one plant then in flower had 1058 blooms on one stem, another plant just over 1000, and several over 600.

The Jerusalem correspondent of the *Jewish Chronicle* mentions that a small steamer has at last been put upon the Jordan, which makes the journey from Jericho to Tiberias—that is, from the Dead Sea, along the Jordan, to the Sea of Galilee—in five hours. Recently four Jewish families have settled in Jericho, having rented for five years from the Sultan a large area of fruitful land for cultivation, to be irrigated from the Jordan.

OUR GRACIOUS QUEEN.

BRIGHT stars o'er Cambrian mountains softly twinkle,
The night is calm and still,
Save for the owl's harsh cry, a sheep-bell's tinkle,
Or murmur of a rill.

While in the valley at a pit's mouth linger
Full many a child and wife,
To learn if Death hath placed his icy finger
Upon some cherished life.

A summer morn bursts forth in all its glory,
And folk in distant shires
Read, with sad thoughts, the miners' tragic story,
Flashed through the pendent wires.

To weary mourners in their desolation,
Bowed down in anguish keen,
Come gracious words of sweet commiseration—
A message from our Queen.

This is one instance only from the numbers
Which thrill her woman's heart,
Evoking sympathy which never slumbers
For those whom Death doth part.

Thus hath she won the love of all her people,
Who share *her* joys and tears;
So let the bells proclaim from tower and steeple
Her reign of sixty years.

In sun-scorched lands beyond remotest ocean
And in the frozen zone,
Her loyal subjects tender their devotion,
And glorify her throne.

One prayer ascends from men of every station,
Where'er her sceptre sways,
That God may bless with peaceful resignation
The sunset of her days—

'Until she passeth through the jewelled portal,
'Mid rush of angels' wings,
To join her dear ones in the life immortal
And meet the King of Kings.

EDMUND PETLEY.

The June part (published on 21st May) of *Chambers's Journal* will contain the opening chapters of a new Novel, entitled

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE,

By FRED WHISHAW,

Author of *A Boyar of the Terrible*, &c.

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A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

BY FRED WHISHAW,

AUTHOR OF 'A BOYAR OF THE TERRIBLE;' 'THE ROMANCE OF THE WOODS;'
'MY TERRIBLE TWIN,' &c.

CHAPTER I.

DURING the morning of that eventful 5th November on which was fought one of the grandest battles that ever English soldiers took a hand in, a young Russian Grand Duke, who intended, together with his brother, to be a spectator of the projected attack upon the British position at Inkermann, had an exciting adventure which very nearly proved his last, and went nigh to depriving Russia of a future Tsar, but gained for the young imperial prince a life-long friend, and for the present writer an important character in this history.

What happened was something like this. The princes, surrounded by a brilliant suite of officers, were engaged in inspecting the troops about to take part in the day's work, riding in and out of the ranks drawn up for their inspection, and greeted everywhere with that explosive Russian military salutation which sounds like '*Drai Jelâyoo!*' The staff were in the best of spirits, and so were the Grand Dukes, for great things were expected of the troops this day; and there was much light-hearted conversation and laughter, in which the Princes Alexander and Constantine took their full share.

Suddenly something happened, however, which, though viewed at first rather as an entertaining episode than otherwise, soon took a more serious aspect. As the glittering company passed a troop of the *Gardes à Cheval*, the horse of one of the troopers took fright and bolted, startled by the sudden greeting of the soldiers to their imperial visitors; and instantly the horse of the Grand Duke Alexander started in pursuit. Constantine, his brother, roared with laughter, and offered to back the prince for a hundred roubles;

but the trooper's charger was a splendid animal, as most of the horses of that fine regiment are, and was not to be so easily overtaken. On went the pair, to the delight of the entire army—a glorious race; and it was not until the animals were seen to be heading straight for the English lines that any one began to look grave.

'Why, confound the fellow,' said Constantine, 'he is leading my brother straight for the British lines. What if they were to gallop into range of the guns?'

As though in answer to this speech, there was a puff of smoke from the top of the hill in the distance, and though the missile did not reach within half-a-mile of the galloping pair, it was nevertheless clear that they had been observed, and that the shot might be accepted as a warning.

At the same moment a horseman was seen to shoot out from the ranks of the Red Hussars, the nearest troop at that moment to the flying pair of riders, and to start in pursuit *ventre à terre*—at racing speed. The last horseman was splendidly mounted; he belonged to a lighter regiment, and was a lighter man than the Grand Duke, and it was seen that he rapidly decreased the distance which separated him from the latter; for the prince's horse, besides having the disadvantage of carrying a heavy weight—the Romanofs are with but few exceptions tall, big men—was labouring now under the additional impediment of a strong application of the curb, which, though failing to stop the excited animal, or even very greatly to diminish its speed, considerably penalised it in the race. The leader—the trooper whose horse had bolted in the first instance—was still well ahead, and though he appeared to be tugging and

swearing at his mount to the top of his bent, his exertions did not seem to have any effect whatever upon the iron-mouthed beast, which, alarmed by the clatter of hoofs behind it, or perhaps delighted with the excitement of the race, carried its rider at a terrific rate towards the enemy's lines.

By this time the glittering group of anxious officers, with the Grand Duke Constantine at their head, were moving pretty fast in the direction taken by the three flying horsemen. The Grand Duke looked grave, and no longer laughed or even spoke. Excepting an occasional ejaculation from one or another of the horrified staff, there was not a word said, as all cantered slowly on in pursuit of the chase.

Meanwhile the three horsemen were now undoubtedly within range of the British guns, and added to the occasional banging of the field-gun, which had several times tried its distance at the little body of cavalry so rashly approaching its fire, there now came more frequent puffs of smoke and the sharper crack of rifles. The position of the three racers was growing every moment more dangerous.

'The hussar is gaining fast,' said Constantine; 'but what does he mean to do—head my brother's horse? Look at the trooper—confound him—he has the best horse of the three—he is going far ahead—what does the hussar mean to do? Who is it, your Excellency?'

'It's too far to see, your Highness,' replied Menshikof, the commander-in-chief, who rode, pale and agitated, at the Grand Duke's side. The young prince imperial was more or less in his charge, and the general did not like to think what the terrible Nicholas might do if anything happened to him.

'It is either Golovanof or Dostoief, your Highness,' said an aide-de-camp, 'but I cannot tell which at this distance. I go by the horse; none but those two possess such a flier as that one there!'

It was indeed a flier, and long as the start given to the Grand Duke had been, his pursuer was now close at his heels. All who watched held their breath, wondering what the hussar intended to do. Head the prince's horse and cause it to bear round and away out of danger? That was felt to be the best course, if it could be so managed.

But meanwhile matters came to a crisis rather quicker than was expected. The trooper, whose horse led the race by at least one hundred yards, was suddenly seen to raise his arms and fall from the saddle; at the same moment his charger swerved, plunged, and striking the ground with its head, turned completely over, rolled round once or twice, and lay still.

'Good God—look at that!' muttered Constantine, crossing himself vehemently, while every hand among the group of watchers hastened to do the same. 'Lord have mercy upon us!—Alexander will be within range of their rifles in a moment.

Head him, hussar, head him!' he shouted excitedly, forgetting that his brother was hundreds of yards beyond any possibility of hearing.

But, apparently, the hussar had other ideas as to the best course to be pursued in this emergency. Almost at the very instant that the trooper and his horse entered the line of fire and fell dead he had caught up to the Grand Duke; and now, if those behind could have heard so far, they would have understood his intentions. 'Hold on, sir; hold on tight!' he shouted. 'I'm going to hamstring him!'

And leaning over, the hussar deftly drew his sabre across the galloping charger's hamstring. The Grand Duke's horse made a few halting bounds forward and then stopped dead, while the hussar rushed past him, and was carried fifty yards farther before he succeeded in pulling up.

Those fifty yards sealed the fate of the poor charger, for at that moment the line of fire was entered and the animal fell dead, pierced by half-a-dozen bullets, pitching its rider over its head as it plunged heavily to earth.

A sigh of relief passed, like a puff of wind, from rank to rank of those who had watched the race as the Grand Duke was seen to have stopped in his mad career in the very nick of time.

'Lord help us, that's a good hussar!' muttered Constantine, crossing himself once more. 'That is a man to be remembered, Menshikof!'

'His Imperial Majesty will not forget him after this,' said the general, 'of that your Highness may rest assured; but it appears to me that the British bullets have cheated our friend of his reward!'

'Nay, see—your Excellency—he is alive!' said a younger and sharper sighted member of the staff; 'he is sitting up, leaning against the horse—wounded though, I think.'

'Certainly wounded, or he would try to retire from that warm place,' some one added. 'But—good Lord have mercy upon us—what is Alexander Nicolaievitch doing? His Highness is walking straight into the line of fire!'

To the horror of all, such appeared to be the case. The Grand Duke had dismounted from his panting disabled horse and seemed to be walking up to join the wounded hussar.

This is what was actually taking place. The hussar officer had received two bullets, one in the thigh the other in the hand, and had settled himself under cover of his dead charger to bind his wounds with his handkerchief and to collect his wits, somewhat scattered by the heavy fall he had just experienced, before attempting to crawl away out of danger. He was so engaged when he observed the officer whose horse he had disabled dismount and approach him.

'Go back, go back, whoever you are!' he cried; 'don't you see I am under fire?'

'But you are wounded!' shouted the unrecognised Grand Duke. 'How are you going to get back?'

'I shall crawl all right in a minute or two,' said the other; 'go back, you, for God's sake.'

'No, no!' cried the Grand Duke. 'You have saved my life; I must certainly do the same for you if I can. There is no danger, for, see, they are not even firing at us!' This was true, for the chivalrous young British officer in command of the outpost, whose good shooting had caused such a flutter in the Russian staff, seeing that it was a matter of life-saving under fire, had given orders that the brave Russian officer should be allowed to perform his heroic action unmolested.

Accordingly the Grand Duke was permitted to walk deliberately up to the now fainting hussar, take him up in his arms and carry him away in safety. Had his ears been sharp enough the Grand Duke might have heard the cheer with which the British outpost greeted this achievement. Bearing his unconscious burden as easily as he would have carried a ten-years child, the Tsarevitch stepped briskly out of danger, and by the time he had covered the hundred yards or so of ground which appeared to him sufficient to place him out of range of possible bullets and had laid his burden upon the ground, the group of pale and gasping staff-officers had cantered up within earshot, and had begun to overwhelm him with respectful reproaches. But these the Grand Duke quickly silenced, waving Menshikof and the rest aside with the remark that any one of them—and he hoped every Russian officer in the army—would have done the same.

Meanwhile restoratives were applied to the young hussar, and the wounded man presently groaned and opened his eyes. Then, noticing in what resplendent company he was, he sat up and rubbed those organs.

'Who are you, my fine fellow?' asked the commander-in-chief.

'Lieutenant Vladimir Dostoief of the Red Hussars, your Excellency,' replied that individual automatically, for his head buzzed still, and he was not sure whether he stood upon that or the other extremity of his person.

'Call yourself captain then from to-day,' said Menshikof; 'you are a lucky young fellow and a smart rider, and the Tsar shall hear of your exploit. You have, under Providence, saved the most valuable life but one in Russia.'

Dostoief looked puzzled, then he glanced at the Grand Duke bending over him, and half-recognised him, as he blushed with surprise and gratification.

'Are you the Grand Duke?' he muttered. 'Upon my word I did not know it when I'—Dostoief tried to get upon his feet, but groaned and fell back. 'I beg your pardon,' he added, murmuring still more feebly, 'but my head feels so'—

At this point the wounded man fainted once more and was carried by careful hands to the rear. Here he was placed in charge of the Grand Duke's own medical attendant, under whose ministrations he was soon made as comfortable as circumstances would permit. And here, too, he was constantly visited by the young Tsarevitch until he was strong enough to be sent back to St Petersburg; and in the hospital building within the walls of Sebastopol were laid the seeds of a friendship between these two which

was to last for many a year and many a decade, and which was destined to be productive of results which I hope to lay before my readers in the course of this history.

A CENTURY AND A HALF OF BRITISH POWER IN INDIA.

By GEORGE SMITH, LL.D., C.I.E.,
Author of *Lives of Duff, Carey, Wilson, &c.*

THREE centuries have almost passed since Queen Elizabeth, in the forty-third year of her reign, created the East India Company, which lasted for two hundred and fifty-eight years as a commercial and then a ruling power. In the sixtieth year of her reign Queen Victoria, as Empress of India also, is about publicly to commemorate with the whole people the growth and prosperity of the Empire of Great Britain, which, as the most extensive world-power in all history, began on the last day of the year 1600, when Queen Elizabeth signed the Company's first charter. For a century and a half the English in India were only adventurous traders, scornfully tolerated by the strong emperors at Delhi, the last of whom was the fanatical Aurungzebe. Along with Portuguese, Dutch, and French rivals, they contended for monopolies of the trade which had attracted the West from the days of King Solomon, Alexander the Great, and the Cæsars. Enlisting and drilling sepoy to guard their factories, and then adding British soldiers and ships also to defeat their European competitors, the great adventurers who formed the Company's servants found themselves without a rival, and face to face with the Hindu and Mohammedan leaders. At one bound Great Britain, all unconscious of the tremendous fact, became legally as well as practically political ruler and sovereign administrator of the territory of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, the size of all France with twice its population at the present day. Other territories in South India were then confirmed to the Company.

That was in the year 1765, from which the history of British India must be held to date. Again and again the Emperor, Shah Aalum, had offered the Company this splendid prize. Even the courage of Robert Clive failed before a trust so exacting. But, returning to India for the last time, he completed his work as founder of the Empire of British India, with a simplicity and a thoroughness which were described by the Mohammedan annalist of the time. The event is worthy of the highest genius of the painter and the poet. The scene was the tent of Clive, the victor of Plassey; but this time in the upper provinces near Allahabad. The throne was a chair placed on the dining-table. Taking his seat, the king, Shah Aalum, signed the 'firman' or decree which, for an annual quit-rent of a quarter of a million sterling, made 'the high and mighty, the noblest of exalted nobles, the chief of illustrious warriors, the English Company,' absolute rulers of the provinces, then yielding a revenue of four millions sterling, but almost ever since paying fourteen millions a year. As if starting back from the consequences, which meant all that India and Southern Asia have now become under Christian rule, Clive's last official advice was to keep up the appearance of respect to his Moham-

medan predecessor, as a titular shadow at least, in order to disarm the jealousy of foreign nations. This was actually done till the last of the Great Mogul emperors was banished as a murderer of English ladies, children, and officers in the Mutiny of 1857.

Great Britain endorsed this act of Clive, whom his detractors hounded to death. The select committee in London described the Company as having 'come into the place of the country's government by his Majesty's royal grant of the dewannee.' Five years after the Company received a parliamentary title to this and all their possessions by Lord North's Regulating Act founded upon 'the eminent dominion of parliament over every British subject in every concern.'

The Empire of British India, and the consequent responsibility of every British citizen, have ever since rested on this union of Musalman, English, and international laws, as consolidated after the Mutiny in the legislation of 1861, and this altogether apart from the patent historical facts of conquest and length of possession. But neither law nor fact could form a sufficient explanation of the unique historical marvel of our Indian Empire were that not justified by such moral considerations as the peace, the prosperity, and the highest good of the people. What have we done for the vast peninsula and for the half of Asia which it influences, in the hundred and thirty-two years since that 12th of August 1765, when Clive made us rulers of the richest third of the country? Sir John Seeley, and John Stuart Mill before him, were no optimists, but both came to this philosophical and historical conclusion as expressed by the former: 'As time passes it appears that we are in the hands of a Providence which is greater than all statesmanship; that this fabric, so blindly piled up, has a chance of becoming a part of the permanent edifice of civilisation; and that the Indian achievement of England, as it is the strangest, may after all turn out to be the greatest, of all her achievements.'

For the first time since successive invading hosts began to pour down on the rich plains from Central and Northern Asia, we have won peace for the people; we have established the reign of law and order; we have enforced absolute toleration of every belief and custom not contrary to humanity. We began with internal peace, and the process of securing that occupied the century from Clive to John Lawrence. The parliamentary constitution of 1773 gave India the first Governor-general and the first Supreme Court of Justice, making the administration an effective and benevolent unity. What Clive won Warren Hastings was compelled to extend. He covered the land with at least the framework of a righteous administration which his successors filled up and elevated bit by bit, as Great Britain allowed or enabled them to do through successive parliamentary charters. Including Clive and the present Lord Elgin, we have sent twenty-seven statesmen to rule over the millions of India and to dictate a policy in Central and Eastern Asia. Seventeen of these were Governor-generals, ending with the Marquess of Dalhousie, and ten of them Viceroy of the Queen Empress, beginning with Earl Canning. The first duty of each has been to secure peace as the elementary condition of the existence of peoples so varied, so irreconcilable

with each other in creed and caste and race, so generally helpless and patient as the prey of invasion and tyranny from the earliest days. The British Peace it has come to be called. Warren Hastings, Cornwallis, Wellesley, Minto, Lord Hastings, Amherst, even the good Lord William Bentinck, whom the Coorg tyrant troubled, Auckland, Ellenborough, Hardinge, and Dalhousie—each played his part for the highest ends, against Afghan, Mohammedan, Mahratta, Pindari, Sikh, and Burman troublers of the land. Dalhousie added to that work the bringing of the native feudatories into line with the British administrators, so that their peoples also should be no more oppressed, but share the general weal. The opportunity created by the Cabinet at home, which reduced the British garrison contrary to Dalhousie's frequent protests, was taken advantage of by the weak representatives of the old Mogul and Mahratta powers to create the Mutiny. But the sepoys war only gave Lord Canning and his soldiers another chance to extinguish the seeds of anarchy in the extended empire, and to vindicate at once the power, the clemency, and the righteousness of the ruling race.

If rest from the anarchy of ages was the first blessing spread right over Southern Asia, at a vast expenditure of British blood and treasure, life in famine, with comparative comfort in living, was the second. The years immediately before Warren Hastings became Governor-general were marked by the most horrible and widespread famine known in oriental history. Not a drop of rain fell in 1769 in all Bengal, usually so well-watered and green, and the intolerable heat burned up vegetation over whole districts. Up to September 1770 four millions died, the living fed on the dead, as officially reported, and thousands fled elsewhere, abandoning their children, so that one-third of the great province just handed over to the British went out of cultivation. The few white officials, like Charles Grant, greatest of Scotsmen who ever worked in India, did what they could; but what was that among so many? The new administrative system of Warren Hastings, as developed by Lord Cornwallis, resulted in the permanent settlement of the land-tax, by which some ten millions sterling were surrendered to the landholders, as compared with the periodical assessments in the rest of India. Gradually prosperity returned, although the actual cultivators were not at first sufficiently protected from the exactions of their own countrymen. In Bengal at least famines became rare or purely local, save in Orissa, which was so shut off by sea, with a coast destitute of harbours, that food could not be quickly enough poured in. In the North-west, in Rajputana and in South India, the more frequent failure of the annual rains has caused the loss of life in spite of all the efforts of Government. That must always be so, under the best administration, when the monsoon fails for two successive years over a large area. But steadily and most benevolently the British Government of India has perfected its life-saving machinery after each case of drought and dearth. In the past and present years the Famine Code, worked at an expenditure of £25,000 a day, in North and Central India by some five hundred white district officials, is keeping alive and well three and a half millions of natives, and providing

for all destitute widows and orphans. In the tropics the rain of heaven must fall from time to time; but the British Government and people stand alone in the determination and preparation—as at present—to save every soul that aid can reach at whatever cost.

The third service which Great Britain has done for the peoples of India is to teach them to help themselves. There is a point at which the most generous expenditure and benevolent efforts through the administration fail to save or to raise a race, and that is when they themselves do not co-operate or when they passively oppose. In spite of the advantages of the autocratic and rapid legislative power of our Government in India, that happens continually. The character of a people cannot be changed in spite of itself. At first the East India Company would not recognise this, notwithstanding the urgency and the wisdom of its own directors so early as 1792, when Charles Grant wrote his famous treatise to convince his colleagues. But the public opinion of Scotland and England, acting through the churches and missionary societies, and finally through parliament, resulted first in the charter of 1813, and more fully in those of 1833 and 1853, step by step every twenty years, in giving the youth of all India education in the mother-tongue and in the English language and literature. William Carey and his associates began this inner civilisation of the people with a view to the development of character, individuality, self-help, and high ideals, in the first year of the nineteenth century. It was left to Alexander Duff and Macaulay, under the administration of Lord William Bentinck, in 1830-35, and again to Duff and John Marshman, with the help of Lord Northbrook (then Mr Baring), in 1850-54, to put the educational system on a catholic and moral basis. Principal Miller, C.I.E., and others, through Lord Ripon's Commission, completed the good work, till India now enjoys the most enlightened and tolerant system of public instruction—primary, secondary, and university—which Ireland and England still lack. Every year sees an addition to the inspected schools and colleges, which already number 105,000, and of students and pupils, who now approach four millions on the rolls. A pure indigenous literature supplies the increasing numbers of women as well as men with books. The proportion who speak and read the English language, and have the stores of our ennobling literature, sacred and secular, opened to their eager study, is annually enlarging. English has become the common tongue of educated India, Musalman as well as Hindu and Parsi.

A rational faith arises out of this vast system of public instruction, alike from its silently destructive power and from the action of Christian Britain and America. Even when the educated native timidly shrinks from the consequences of formally renouncing idolatry or Islam, he becomes a secret Christian, or he adopts an ethical compromise which makes him a new man. There are now in India two and a half millions of native Christians. On the ground of their active loyalty alone, the British Government may well desire to see that number growing more rapidly.

Political dreams and aspirations, also, arise out of the higher education, the admission of natives

to the civil, medical, and legal services, and the frequent visits of the educated to the British universities. Such dreams are often extravagant and unpractical. They could not be realised unless either we ceased to keep a British garrison in the country or the martial and less educated races—Sikhs, Rajputs, Jats, and Mohammedans—would tolerate the ascendancy of the intellectual but weak Bengalis, at whom they scoff. But, though a representative system in the English sense is impossible, natives are admitted to the deliberative legislative councils, where interpellation is allowed, and they fill all but seven hundred of the highest appointments. The study of the constitution and of the parliamentary system in actual work every session, and the perfect toleration of opinion granted by the law, are by themselves a valuable education. This freedom has its drawbacks, common also to our whole legal system which, by the refinements of its procedure, encourages the usurer to oust the ancestral landed classes. But absolute purity reigns in the administration of justice.

The material, physical, and industrial advantages created and fostered by our rule are more evident to all. The traveller through India to-day cannot realise that its abundant and rapid communications, by sea and land, are the outcome of less than half-a-century's application of British capital. When the writer went to India in 1853 the first mile of railway was opened by Lord Dalhousie, who planned the trunk system and had difficulty in getting it sanctioned. Now 22,000 miles are at work, and the railway is so cheap and popular that this mileage pays on an average five per cent. Every year large sums of rupees as well as English capital are to be spent on a definite system till the 22,000 becomes 60,000 miles. No country with a new civilisation possesses such good roads as India. Along with railways and roads, canals and works of irrigation, like those of North Italy, guarantee the plains of India against the hopeless and unrelieved famines of old. Through all the past generations almost exclusively an agricultural people, save for a few of the more luxurious arts and village weaving, the people of India are now learning applied science, till the competition with Lancashire is considered formidable. The indigenous supply of coal is rendering them independent of Wales. A new industrial era has begun to dawn upon this part of the immovable East. Gold, grain, and fibres, tea and coffee, are now exported in quantities which a generation ago would not have been credited. India takes British manufactures to the value of more than thirty millions sterling every year, or a seventh of the whole, in exchange for its exports, which amount to seventy millions to all the world; while it continues to absorb silver notwithstanding the serious result of exchange on its finances, and the closing of its mints meanwhile against more silver, to relieve the strain.

While Great Britain has thus been led, by no deliberate will of its own, to become a terrestrial providence to a fifth of the human race in its one dependency of India, what has that country done for us? Undoubtedly, it has affected our foreign policy, our position as one of the Powers of Europe, for evil as well as good. Against the strain of defending from internal and external

attack alien peoples so far away, in addition to the Colonies planted by our own sons, we must set all that is included in the prestige which flows from our position and past success. No other power has such a school of war, such a place of arms as India, from Allahabad and Secunderabad right up to Rawal Pindi and Peshawar, to Quetta and Chaman, fronting Kandahar. It is much to send 75,000 of our young men to garrison India, while we maintain more than double that number of native cavalry and infantry. But that trained reserve is known to be such a make-weight in the event of a war in Europe that Russia has hitherto troubled us in Central Asia only to compel us to keep up our Eastern garrison. India has for three centuries, and especially during this century, given the adventurous and most highly-educated of our sons the finest career in its various services, missionary, civil, military, medical, and educational. Its conflicts and tropical diseases may have, up to recent times, made it a land of sad memories and regrets to many. But the heroism of our Nicholsons and Havelocks, our Hebers and John Wilsons, who consecrate its cemeteries, is that which makes the history of our country a record of greatness and goodness such as no other can show.

After all, it is a small thing that India does all this for us compared with the moral inspiration which duty to its people calls forth, and the splendid ideals which disinterested service for its dark races of every creed creates. If it was the destiny of the East India Company to suggest the true theory of the government of a semi-barbarous dependency by a civilised country, and, after having done this, to perish, as John Stuart Mill writes—a theory which, alas! South Africa has never learned—much more will it be the glory of the Queen-Empress and her lieutenants to unite the varied and often-jarring millions of her subjects in active loyalty and moral advancement. The years since Clive, in 1765, and Carey, in 1792, and the men of 1857, are full of hope for the future.

THE NOBLE FIVE.

A TALE OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA GOLD MINES.

By ROGER POOCK,

Author of *Tales of Western Life*; *The Arctic Night*; *The Black-guard*; *The Dragon Slayer*, &c.

I.

WE were standing under one of the three big pines on the Point, and my partner, Blind Tom, took off his goggles with a despairing gesture.

'I can't see nothin' beyond them first trees,' he said miserably, 'but I can hear her coming.'

I looked away down south along the lake-side, where sure enough a black speck had just jumped out from behind a headland—the little weekly steamer which brought us the only news we ever got from the world. Then I turned my face towards the camp.

Scattering up under the woods, and down towards our Point were the twenty log-cabins of Ainsworth, the shadows lying in dense blue pools under their caves, their shingle roofs like burning gold in the sunlight. The scent of the pines hung heavy as incense, and the lake reached away

some fifty miles to north and south, all hyacinth blue save where the sun had changed it to the southward into a field of fire. Above the camp and across the lake the mountains went up steep toward the snow, but they seemed like the Alps of Dreamland in that unearthly silence. It seemed brutish of me to break the peace; but, blasphemy or not, I roused the camp. 'Steam-boat!' I yelled with my hands to my mouth—'Steamboat!' (N.B.—This is a very pretty bit of description, not mine however. It was filled in afterwards by a lady, and many of my best bits struck out as 'nonsense'.)

All the boys began to saunter lazily down from their afternoon sleep, prospectors like Blind Tom and myself, in ragged overalls, slouch hats, and long boots—a muddy-looking crowd. A lady or two strolled out from the farthest shanty; but these were not greeted by the women who were earning their living in the little hotels and stores, and when they reached the Point they stood rather apart among the men.

The gambler came down in broadcloth and jewellery, the store-clerk in his shirt sleeves from behind the counter, the three bar-tenders in shirt sleeves and imitation diamonds, the assayer hot from his furnace work, a nondescript stranger or so looking bored to death, and our Kootenay policeman.

Then the little steamer stopped puffing as she glided gently in to the landing, while we ashore began to size up her passengers.

'Look there,' I said; 'see that old buffer in a silk hat?'

'No,' Tom growled; 'but there's petticoats by the engine-room.'

'He's standing beside her. Old, with a huge red nose, lean as a rail, tall as a pole, chewing his cigar; a Southern Colonel by the looks of him. Tom, that man represents capital, or I'm a tenderfoot.'

'Capital!' Tom snorted contemptuously. 'Bring him to me and I'll sell him one of my wild-cats.'

Tom's wild-cat mining claims—including that worst of all, the Noble Five—were the scorn and derision of Kootenay, so I grinned.

The Colonel was helping the young lady ashore, a fresh-coloured, well-built, well-dressed, capable-looking girl, extremely pretty besides, with a decidedly stand-off manner toward her escort.

Tom suggested that he was her father; but I knew better, by the way he bowed and grimaced like a stage cavalier, spitting tobacco-juice over his shoulder at intervals.

'By his manner of spitting,' said Tom, 'that's the Colonel—the same as was here three months ago trying to get me to sell the Noble Five. He's come to try again.'

Now the Noble Five mining-claim, which belonged exclusively to Tom, was the standing mystery of the camp. Everybody knew it was no good—Tom said as much himself—and yet for three years he had never failed to put in his annual assessments, which means that he worked enough on the claim to secure his legal right of holding it from the government. Moreover, it was known that this Colonel had for some unearthly reason been trying his hardest to buy the property at a fancy price, whereas Tom, fearfully hard pressed for money, declined to sell. Why

the Colonel should want to buy, and why Blind Tom should be so determined to hold an utterly worthless property was a thing past finding out.

Meanwhile the Colonel had been setting the young lady's luggage ashore; and I strolled down, wondering why she should look so perplexed, so frightened, as for the first time her eyes wandered among us from face to face. Certainly we were a rough-looking crowd, and the girl was apparently very green, with something suggestive of an English country-side in her dress and bearing. Raising my hat, I asked if I could be of any service.

'No, no,' she said, drawing back a little, 'I think not, thank you.' Then I felt like a fool for meddling; but she looked me all over doubtful because of my clothes, which felt unspeakably vile under her glance, then at my face, which seemed to win her confidence.

'Forgive me,' I said, trying to withdraw, lest I should prove but a fresh annoyance.

'Oh stay,' she cried, for the Colonel was coming back. 'Please can you tell me if Mr Swainson lives here?'

'I'm afraid I don't know the name.'

She turned to the Colonel, as though thoroughly frightened. 'Please put my boxes back on the boat; I'm going—I can't stay here!'

'My dear young lady (spit), neaon if you'll take the advice of one (spit) who has ploughed the tortuous waters of (spit) human wayfaring, in an irreclaimable waste of variegated abominations (spit)'—

'Let me help,' I said, laying hold of one of her trunks.

At that she begged me to desist. 'I'll stay here.' She laid one hand on my arm, sending a little thrill through all my veins, for it was years since I had felt the touch of a lady's hand. 'I can't go in the steamer—I'—

I thought I had grasped her reason, and for decency's sake I could not hold back from helping her. So I took out what money I had left after a three days' spree. 'Now,' I said, 'you really must let me lend you this, and I'll give you my address, so that you won't feel under an obligation.'

I saw the tears filling her eyes, the queer little frown, the turn of the lips which means a storm. Of course I looked steadily away down the lake.

'All aboard!' shouted the skipper, for the hawsers were being cast off—'All aboard for the *Bluebell*!'

One or two men jumped over the after-rail.

'I think,' I said, slowly, for I was horribly puzzled, 'you'd better—be quick.'

I had meant to say 'stay here.'

'I'll stay.' She looked at me critically, though there was a big tear on her cheek. 'I'll stay; because I trust you.'

'You can trust every one of us, no matter what we may look like.' So I went on explaining until we were all nice woolly lambs, instead of black sheep and dingy. After all, a decent woman puts every man in camp on his honour, and the average prospector would rather meet a roaring lion than a lady, not knowing the natural history of such an outlandish species.

'Is the old gentleman a friend of yours?' I asked.

She looked aversion towards that ancient Colonel, who was talking the storekeeper blind.

'He was very kind,' she answered. 'I never met him before; we were just fellow-passengers, and he offered to make inquiries here.'

'For Mr Swainson?'

'Yes.'

I did not press the matter.

'Please,' she looked up at me wistfully, 'tell me your name. I want to know in case I need a friend.'

'I'm Jack Robinson.' That was my name then.

'Mr Robinson'—she looked at me quite frankly—'what ought I to do?'

'I think you should let the Colonel be your escort, rather than any younger man. He'll take you up to the hotel; but, if you don't mind, I'll say a few words to the landlady.'

'Not about'—

'Oh no; only she has a little house of her own away from all the noise. She'll take you there.'

Then she said something very complimentary, which there is no need to repeat.

II.

Before supper-time I had introduced Miss Rose Innes to the landlady at our one decent hotel, and arranged that she should be properly cared for away from the noise of the crowd. Afterwards I strolled into the bar-room, where the Colonel had been holding forth on mines and mineral.

'Sir,' said the Colonel amiably, 'air you disposed to smile?'

I was disposed, so we took whisky.

'Sir,' continued the Colonel, wiping his mouth afterwards with a red handkerchief, 'will yew do me the honour to select?'

He held me his cigar-case, from which I selected, then after the usual salute held a match for him, bit off the end of mine, and lighted up.

'Sir,' the Colonel resumed, 'you air a benighted Britisher?'

I bowed.

'Let us stroll down to the Point.'

We strolled down to the Point, where the moonlight was raining down through the big fir-trees.

'Sir,' he said, planting himself on a root, while I took the ground beside him, 'I have ventured into the British possessions to take the air, and anything else which I can lay hands on. Much as I prefer the atmosphere of freedom, I have pitched my tent in these barbarous wilds without committing myself to any approval of monarchical government. You take my position?'

'I do.'

'Then kindly refrain from interrupting. These gold and silver destricts of British Columbia air an Amurrican enterprise, redeemed by the capital and the labour of an enlightened and far-seeing people. Waiving all our natural antipathy to foreign and obsolete institootions, mitigating the woes of exile with our national beverages and our national seegars, we have come upon a mission of civilisation, to root around for the almighty dollar.'

'It's very good of you.'

'Sir, you air right. But for us the untutored buffalo would still be ranging upon these'—he

looked up at the mountains—'would still I say be—sir, in these altitudes whisky is both prevalent and effective.'

He paused.

'You, sir,' he said with tremendous impressiveness, 'represent a syndicate of London capitalists.'

'Indeed!'

'I suspected it from the moment I landed here. Your clothes are, if I may say so, too ragged for a genuine prospector. The eagle eye which only betrays my nationality revealed you to me at once. By inquiring I have ascertained that you talk very freely about mines and minerals, that you speak as though you didn't know free gold from iron pyrites. The boys here think you're a fool, but I know the smart man when I see him, with an unerring perspicacity I recognise the secret agent of British capital, the mining representative on the lookout for bargains. Don't blush; your modesty does you credit, and the disguise which conceals your real character from the ignorant wins you the cordial approbation of the wise. Sir, you air the smartest man in Kootenay.'

'Thanks. I don't represent five cents.'

He puffed at his cigar, lighted another, and threw the stump away.

'Sir, I wish to lay before you a little proposition, which I need hardly say demands extreme secrecy, which I also opine is calculated to rake in the "dust,"'

'Is it honest?'

'Honesty, sir, belongs rather to the relative than to the absolute. This is a perfectly legitimate deal.'

'I see. Is it honest?'

'It is as I tell you—the Colonel was getting hot—"legitimate mining business involving your assistance, which is worth, let us say, five thousand dollars, and my intelligence, which is worth twenty-five thousand. However, in deference to one who is about to become my partner in the building up of the most gigantic combination of modern times, we'll divvy up.'

'Is it honest?'

'When I was down to Nelson to-day,' said the Colonel blandly, 'I met the champion Canadian bug-hunter, Professor Lamb. He says that this country teems with unnamed species. I told him he'd ought to prospect around Bawston, where I was raised; but now I calculate that this locality fills the prescription first-rate'—

'Boston?' said I.

'Sir, this planet rotates around Bawston. Bawston is the North Pole of civilisation, you bet your life.'

'What,' said I, 'has it actually been discovered? I think I've heard of the place. Isn't it somewhere down near Toronto?'

That finished him.

'And now, Colonel,' said I, 'have you finished gassing?'

'Sir,'

'To speak your own language, Colonel, are you through?'

'Sir, since you have made yourself intelligible, I air.'

'You've been trying, Colonel, to buy my partner's old claim, the Noble Five.'

'That is so.'

'He won't sell, so you come to me thinking

that you can bribe me with five thousand dollars to work Blind Tom.'

'Your expression, sir, is crude, your tone offensive, your proposal avaricious.'

I stood up. 'My proposal, Colonel, is to have you run out of this camp if you try to do any of your "puffeckly legitimate" monkey business with my friend's property. If he won't sell, you can't buy, and you can't bribe me to help you. Now, he may have done his assessments or he may not, but if I catch you trying to jump his claim, you'll find yourself in the lake. Moreover, the lake, Colonel, is *wet*; you understand?'

So I left him, and strolling up to the saloon found my partner, to whom I told what had happened.

Very little fun could Tom see in my adventure, but then poor old Tom was always averse to a joke. 'This thing's serious,' said he, 'mighty serious. The rooster represents capital—we're both stony broke, and I'm going to sell him wild-cats, so don't you insult him more 'n is needful. I've arranged to take him around to some claims to-morrow.'

'Who does he represent?'

'That new smelter at Macdonald City they say. Surtees the manager's buying up interests everywhere. This man is his jackal.'

'Go ahead,' said I, 'good luck to you. But you take care or he'll be strolling up the hill to jump the Noble Five.'

'He can't touch it. I've done a good year's work on that claim; I've proved my property in the Noble Five. He doesn't stand the ghost of a show.'

'I tell you, Tom, he'll steal that claim, and it will take you all the money you can raise to prove your right.'

'If he pulls up my stakes,' said Tom, 'if he so much as lays his finger on my boundaries, law or no law, right or no right, justice or no justice, I'll kill him.'

A LIVING LINK WITH SCOTT, HOGG, AND WILSON.

It is scarcely known in Scotland, and is probably not known at all in England, that there is living in the picturesque Ayrshire parish of Dundonald, and in the enjoyment of all his faculties, a man who, though Mr Gladstone's junior by a year, lived in the service of the Ettrick Shepherd for a decade, has seen Sir Walter Scott not only in the flesh but in his convivial moments, and has shared in genuine 'Noctes Ambrosianæ' with 'Christopher North.' Yet such is the case. About sixty years ago Colonel Keith succeeded to the estate of Dunkeith in the Ayrshire parish of Symington, and set about sheep-farming. He required a first-class herdsman, and consulted a friend residing at Dalkeith, who at once recommended a Selkirk expert of the name of Burnett. Burnett was satisfied with the offer made, and migrated to Ayrshire. Wages being higher there than in the east, his family followed him. It included a son of the name of John, who was born in the year 1810, and who, five years after his arrival in Ayrshire, became farm-grieve or general overseer to Colonel Kelso. He remained in this capacity till his employer's death; after this he

filled various posts in Ayrshire, and ultimately was a 'flesher' first in Troon and subsequently in Dundonald.

But it is the pre-Ayrshire portion of John Burnett's history that is of special importance. He was herd-boy to James Hogg from 1824 to 1834 at Mount Benger, the farm a few miles down the Yarrow from St Mary's Loch, and a short distance from Altrive Lake, where the Shepherd died in 1835. Mount Benger was not the most delectable of residences; Hogg himself said of it in the *Noctes*, 'It's a gey cauld place, Mount Benger, standin' yonder on a knowe in a funnel, in the thoroughfare o' a perpetual sigh.' Nor was it a farming success in Hogg's hands any more than Ellisland—the 'riddlings of creation'—was in Burns's. His sometime herd-boy gave some notable reasons for this failure in the course of an interview he gave a few years ago to the Rev. Roderick Lawson, minister of the West Parish, Maybole. In a brief report of this interview which Mr Lawson included in one of his most interesting 'monthly letters' to his congregation, he tells this part of John Burnett's story with simple lucidity. 'Why was it he did not succeed in farming? Well, markets were against him for one thing. I have seen him getting only six shillings and sixpence a head for his lambs. Then, he was very kind-hearted. I mind a joiner in Yarrow who bought a quey from him. But the quey died, and when he came to pay Hogg the price of it, James took him out to the byre to judge between two queys that were there. The man indicated his preference for the one that was deepest in the flank. Whereupon James insisted on his taking it home with him in place of the dead one, he having learned that the joiner was hard up.'

The present writer, however, who visited John Burnett a few months ago, did not find the sometime herd-boy of seventy years ago much interested in his master's farming activities or disqualifications. Now and then his memory required a jog; but it became vividly reminiscent, and his eye flashed fire by way of keeping it company, when he told of the exploits of Hogg the athlete and the encourager of athleticism; Hogg who had taught him a special trick in wrestling, and so enabled him—though he can never have been such another as John Ridd—to vanquish a powerful rival.

The Shepherd seems, however, to have been in all his glory when he went a-fishing. Burnett told the present writer a story of salmon-leistering at midnight on the Yarrow, which Scott would have found not unworthy of a place beside his own inimitable picture in *Guy Mannering*. Professor Wilson was, of course, a frequent visitor at Mount Benger, and, as a rule, came unannounced. But on this occasion he received a special invitation, and when he arrived brought with him a friend of both himself and his host, who may have been De Quincey or Wilson's publisher Blackwood, but whom, having failed to identify, Burnett persistently terms 'the wee man.' Night came, a suitable pool was selected and was surrounded by boys and men carrying torches. 'The wee man' being, like Captain Grose, 'of stature short, but genius bright,' had resolved to distinguish himself. So, seeing a large salmon in the pool which invited attack, he stood upon a stone

and made a thrust with his leister. But he had miscalculated his distance and the depth of the pool. He fell in, and in a moment nothing was seen of the adventurous 'wee man' but a pair of boots, which, from their vigorous kicking, showed that their owner was still very much alive. But Hogg and Wilson were lying on the river-bank convulsed with laughter, and unable to render their friend any assistance, and the 'wee man' had to be pulled out by the attendants. The salmon-leistering then proceeded with great spirit and success for some time, when an adjournment was thought desirable to the nearest hostelry, kept by a Boniface of the name of Gordon. Forbes Mackenzie was not in these days a power in the land, and Wilson ordered a bottle of whisky, which, being converted into toddy, was consumed by the company, numbering, with the attendants, seven or eight in all. Meanwhile the 'wee man' had retired to divest himself of his wet clothing and to get into garments which belonged to the landlord. These being a world too wide for him, he presented a comic spectacle when he appeared in the parlour. He ordered a second Thor-like jorum of toddy, and when it had been consumed the party proceeded again to the banks of the Yarrow. Having gathered up the spoils of the night, they returned to Mount Benger. The festivities were not, however, terminated. The fish were taken to the kitchen, boiled, and served up hot with potatoes by way of supper. Hogg, his guests, and his servants regaled themselves with this harvest of the river—and, of course, some toddy. But John Burnett stoutly maintains that nobody was ever a bit the worse of these Mount Benger festivities. The Shepherd of the *Noctes* on one memorable and drouthy occasion implored Tibbie to 'bring in the loch.' The Shepherd of fact never required any such stupendous rehabilitation. His herd-boy told Mr Lawson that he 'never saw Hogg the worse of whisky in his life.' To the present writer he said that he 'never saw Hogg wi' mair than he cud mainage.' But John, whose clear eye, mental vigour, and blameless record tell their own tale of a well-spent life, admits that in the old days, when, as Mr Lang shows in his biography of Lockhart, the 'Chaldee Manuscript' was written between six in the evening and six the following morning, with the aid of punch, men could 'mainage' a good deal, thanks to open air, abundance of exercise, and not too great pressure of labour.

John Burnett's favourite story, however, is that of his first glimpse of a gentleman's carriage, and of Sir Walter Scott inside it. One very wet forenoon, when John was standing idle in front of the farmhouse, a 'machine' drove up, which by its size and comparative splendour attracted the lad. There stepped out a tallish man, somewhat bent about the shoulders, and slightly lame of one leg. The boy was specially struck with this lameness, and also with a bonnet with a silver tassel attached to it that the stranger wore. But before the visitor could make his presence known at the door, Hogg rushed out and speedily identified him in his hearty if also rudely familiar style, 'Man, Wattie, is that you? Ye maun hae been raal warm at hame to come out in a day like this. I'm glad to see ye; come awa in. There's a sheep's head an' plenty o' usquebaugh.' Thus 'the King of Fairyland,' as Hogg, with an egotism

that was amusing rather than offensive, styled himself, welcomed 'the King of Romance.' Scott spent several hours with his friend, and then drove back to Abbotsford. Asked if the Great Wizard showed any traces of the indoor festivities, John replied with his wonted caution and charity, 'Weel, he juist had as muckle as he cud mainage.' But in point of hardness of head, Scott was no rival of Wilson, or for that matter of Hogg. John is emphatic, however, in his declaration that the Shepherd was not a hard, much less a solitary, drinker. He generally did his literary work at night, when the labours of the farm were over, and often sat up till two or three in the morning. But he never stimulated his fancy with alcoholics.

Although quite the opposite of a boaster or an egotist in the vulgar sense, John has many stories to tell of his own wrestling and shooting exploits, which seem to have been all greatly rejoiced in by Hogg, although he did not take part in them himself. He tells with great glee how he and another herd, with the help of an old gun which had certainly not the virtues of a modern Lee-Metford rifle, and full of what Sydney Smith terms 'the sinious schoolboy-delight in giving pain to others,' blinded a troublesome bull that was in the habit of molesting passers through a field adjoining Hogg's farm. The Shepherd detected the young rascals, but was successful in shielding them from the wrath of the owner of the bull. Hogg himself was no shot, but 'he was a first-rate hand with the rod, and used to keep two greyhounds, one of which was a *carrier*, so that when he went out he seldom came home without some fish and a hare or two.'

One very curious story was told of Hogg by John which may be worthy of the attention of critics who are sceptical as to Hogg being really the author of certain of the works attributed to him. The actual narrative has been given by Mr Lawson with such accuracy that it is only fair to reproduce it as he has given it: 'I remember the year I went to Hogg a strange circumstance happened. Hogg had written a story about a stranger in these parts who had hanged himself over a hay-rick, about one hundred years ago, and was not therefore allowed to be buried in the churchyard but out in the moors at a place where three lairds' ground met. Some of the Edinburgh folk counted this a fable, so Hogg determined to put the tradition, which he had from his grandfather, to the proof. One day, therefore, when John Burnett was in the farmyard, Mr Hogg came down from the hills with some others, and gave Johnnie an old bonnet of the Glengarry sort and some pieces of woollen cloth to wash in the burn. Johnnie washed them, and on coming in was told that these were some of the clothes of the suicide, who had been buried in the moss just as he was, with the hay-rope still round his neck, and the moss had preserved them from decay. John said that the hair inside the bonnet seemed like a woman's hair, as it was long and fair. But Hogg remembered that the stranger had long fair hair and seemed to come of gentle blood, although he had latterly become a poor unknown waif.' This story of Burnett's is not very interesting in itself, but is of permanent literary value as confirming the belief that Hogg was the author

of that extraordinary and—so far as Scotland is concerned—unique story of eeriness and crime, madness and remorse, *The Suicide's Grave*. Included in the collected editions of Hogg's works under the title of *The Confessions of a Fanatic*, the story is known to have been first published anonymously in 1824 under the title of *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. This view is practically confirmed by Burnett's narrative, for he says that the incidents he relates occurred in the year 1824, when he went to Mount Benger as herd-boy. Mr Andrew Lang and others have been inclined to give Lockhart a share in the authorship of *The Suicide's Grave*; but for this evidence has never been forthcoming. Burnett's testimony may now be regarded as final. It may be presumed, therefore, that the mode in which the poor suicide accomplished his purpose is accurately described in a letter which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* three-quarters of a century ago: 'He had fastened two old hay-ropes at the bottom of the rick on one side (indeed they are all fastened so when first laid on) so that he had nothing to do but to loosen two of the ends on the other side. These he had tied in a knot round his neck, and then slackening his knees and letting himself down gradually, till the hay-ropes bore all his weight, he had contrived to put an end to his existence in that way. . . . Early next morning Mr Anderson's servants went reluctantly away, and taking an old blanket with them for a winding sheet, they rolled up the body of the deceased, first in his own plaid, letting the hay-rope still remain about his neck, and then rolling the old blanket over all, they bore the loathed remains away to the distance of three miles or so on spokes, to the top of Cowan's Croft, at the very point where the Duke of Buccleuch's land, the Laird of Drummelzier's, and Lord Napier's meet, and there they buried him, with all that he had on and about him, silver knife and fork, and all together.'

MY LORD DUKE.*

By E. W. HORNUNG.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE CAT AND THE MOUSE.

'You're a lucky fellow,' said the squatter, as they sauntered down the drive. 'Give me another of those cigars; they are better than mine, after all.'

'They ought to be,' replied Jack complacently. 'I told old Claude to lay in the best they make, and he says these are. They are over a shillin' a piece.'

'They must be; they're excellent. What an income you must have!'

'About fifteen bob a minute, so they tell me.'

'My stars! After a pound a week in the bush!'

'It does sound rummy, doesn't it? After you with the match, sir.'

'It's incredible.'

'Yet it's astonishing how used you get to it in time—you'd be surprised! At first the whole thing knocked me sideways; it was tucker I couldn't digest. But once you take to the soft

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tack, there's nothing like it in the world. You may guess who's made me take to it quicker than I might have done !'

Dalrymple shrugged his massive shoulders, and raised a contemplative eye to the moon that lay curled like a silver shaving in the lucid heavens.

'Oh yes, I can guess,' said he sardonically. 'And mind you, I've nothing against the girl—I meant you were lucky there. The girl's all right—if you must marry. I don't dislike a woman who'll show fight; and she looked like showing it when I tried on that cracker-nightcap thing of yours. Oh, certainly! If you were to marry, you couldn't have done better; the girl's worth fifty of her mother, at any rate.'

'Fifty million!' cried Jack, somewhat warmly.

'Fifty million I meant to say,' and the squatter ran his arm through that of his host. 'Come, don't you mind me, Jack, my boy! You know what an old heathen I am in those little matters; and we have lots of other things to talk about, in any case.'

Jack was mollified in a moment.

'Lots!' he cried. 'I don't seem to have seen anything of you yet, and I'm sure you haven't seen much of the place. Isn't it a place and a half? Look at the terrace in the moonlight—and the spires—and the windows—hundreds of 'em—and the lawn and the tank! Then there's the inside; you've seen the hall; but I must show you the picture-gallery and the state apartments. Such pictures! They say it's one of the finest private collections in the world; there's hardly one of them that isn't by some old master or other. I've heard the pictures alone are worth half-a-million of money!'

'They are,' said Dalrymple.

'You've heard so, too?'

'Of course; my good fellow, your possessions are celebrated all the world over; that's what you don't appear to have realised yet.'

'I can't,' said Jack. 'It puts me in a sick funk when I try! So it would you if you were suddenly to come in for a windfall like mine—that is, if you were a chap like me. But you aren't; you'd be the very man for the billet.'

And Jack stepped back to admire his hero, who chuckled softly as he smoked, standing at his full height, with both hands in his pockets, and the moon like limelight on his shirt.

'It's not a billet I should care about,' said the squatter; 'but it's great fun to find you filling it so admirably!'

'I don't; I wish I did,' said Jack, throwing away the cigar which he had lighted to keep his guest company.

'You do, though. And if it isn't a rude question'—Dalrymple hesitated, staring hard—'I dare say you're very happy in your new life?'

'Of course I'm very happy now. None happier!'

'But apart from the girl?'

'You can't get apart from her; that's just it. If I'm to go on being happy in my position, I'll have to learn to fill it without making myself a laughing-stock; and the one person who can teach me will be my wife.'

'I see. Then you begin to like your position for its own sake?'

'That's so,' replied Jack. He was paring a

cake of very black tobacco for the pipe which he had stuck between his teeth. Dalrymple watched him with interest.

'And yet,' said the squatter, 'you have neither acquired a taste for your own most excellent cigars nor conquered your addiction to the vile twist we used to keep on the station!'

'Well, and that's so, too,' laughed Jack. 'You must give a fellow time, Mr Dalrymple!'

'Do you know what I thought when I met you yesterday?' continued Dalrymple, turning his back to the moon, and looking very hard at Jack as he sucked at his cigar with his thick, strong lips. 'Do you know how you struck me then? I thought you'd neither acquired a taste for your new life nor conquered your affection for the old. That's how you struck me in Devenholme yesterday.'

Jack made no haste to reply. He was not at all astonished at the impression he had created the day before. But his old boss was the one living man before whom he was anxious to play his great part with some dignity, even at the expense of a pose. And it is noteworthy that he had neither confided in Dalrymple concerning his dilemma of the previous day nor yet so much as mentioned in his hearing the model hut among the pines.

'I don't wonder,' he said at length; 'it was the way I was likely to strike you just then. Don't you see, I hadn't got it out at the time?'

'So it was only the girl that was on your nerves?' said Dalrymple, with disgust.

'And wasn't that enough? If I'm a different man to-day, you know the reason why. As for being happy in my position, and all that, I'm simply in paradise at this moment. Think of it! Think of me as I was, and look at me as I am; think of my little hut on Carara, and look behind you at Maske Towers!'

They were on the terrace now, leaning idly against the balustrade. Dalrymple turned and looked: like Melrose Abbey, the grand gray building was at its best in the 'pale moonlight'; the lichened embrasures met the soft sky softly; the piercing spires were sheathed in darkness; and the mountainous pile wore one uniform tint, from which the lighted windows stood out like pictures on a wall. Dalrymple looked, and looked again; then his hard eyes fell upon the rude ecstasy of the face beside him; and they were less hard than before.

'You may make yourself easy,' said the squatter.

'I shan't stay long.'

'What the blazes do you mean?' cried Jack.

'I want you to stay as long as ever you can.'

'You may; your friends do not.'

'Hang my friends!'

'I should enjoy nothing better; but it isn't practicable. Besides, they're a good deal more than your friends now; they are—your people. And they don't like the man who was once your boss; he offends their pride!'

'Mr Dalrymple!'

'Enough said, my boy. I know my room, and I'm going to turn in. We'll talk it over again in the morning; but my mind is made up. Good-night!'

'I'll come in with you.'

'As you like.'

They parted at the visitor's door.

'You'll disappoint me cruel if you *do* go,' said Jack, shaking hands. 'I'm quite sure you're mistaken about my friends; Olivia, for one, thinks no end of you. However, as you say, we can talk it over in the morning when you've got to see the pictures as well, and don't you forget it. So long, sir, till then.'

'So long, Jack. I'll be your man in the morning, at all events. And I shall look forward to a great treat in your famous picture-gallery.'

But Jack was engaged; and he realised it in the morning as he had not done before. Olivia lured him from the squatter's side; she had every intention of doing so. The pair went for a little stroll. Neither wore a watch; the little stroll lengthened into miles; it carried them beyond the sound of the stable-clock; they forgot the world, and were absurdly late for lunch. Lady Caroline Sellwood had taken it upon herself to conduct the meal without them. Dalrymple was in his place; his expression was grimly cynical; he had seen the pictures, under Claude Lafont's skilled escort, and with the ladies' permission he would now leave the table, as he had still to put in his things.

His things! Was he going, then? Jack's knife and fork fell with a clatter.

'I thought you knew,' said Claude. 'He is going up to town by the afternoon train. I have ordered the landau, as I thought you would like him to go as he came.'

When Jack heard this, he, too, left the table, and bounded upstairs. He found Dalrymple packing his dress-clothes, with the assistance of none other than Stebbings. Jack glared at the disgraced butler, and ordered him out of the room.

'I wouldn't have done that,' remarked the squatter, pausing in his work; 'the fellow came to know if he could do anything for me, with tears in his eyes, and he has made me a handsome apology. He didn't ask me to beg him off, but I mean to try my luck in that way before I go.'

'You mustn't go!'

'I must. Will you forgive the old man?'

'Not if you clear.'

'My good fellow, this is unreasonable'—

'So it is, Mr Dalrymple, on *your* part,' rejoined Jack warmly. 'It's too bad of you. Bother Stebbings! I shan't be hard on him, you may be sure; and you mustn't be hard on me. Surely you can make allowances for a chap who's engaged to a girl like mine? I *did* want to speak to you this morning; but she came first. I want to speak to you now—more than you suppose. Mr Dalrymple, I wasn't straight with you last night; not altogether. But I can't suffer steering crooked, it gives me the hump, and as sure as I do it I've got to go over the ground again. You are the man I owe my all to; I can't end up crooked with *you*!'

Dalrymple sat on the bedside in his shirt sleeves; he had turned up the cuffs; his strong and shapely wrists lay along his thighs; and his gray eyebrows, but not his lips, asked for more.

'I mean,' continued Jack, 'about what was bothering me that day I ran against you in Devenholme. It was only the day before yesterday, but, bless us! it seems like the week before last.'

And with that he unfolded, with much rapid detail, the whole episode of Matthew Hunt, from the morning in the stable-yard to the midnight at the hut. The story within that story was also told, with particular care and circumstance; but long before the end was reached Dalrymple had emptied his bag upon the bed, and had himself rung to countermand the carriage. He was interested; he would stay another day.

Downstairs in the drawing-room the Sellwood family and Claude Lafont were even then congratulating themselves upon the imminent departure of the unpopular guest. Their faces were so many sights when Jack entered in the highest spirits to tell them of his successful appeal to the better feelings of 'good old Dalrymple,' who, after all, was not going to leave them just yet. Jack was out again in an instant; and they next saw him, from the drawing-room windows, going in the direction of the hut with his odious old friend at his side. Whereupon Claude Lafont said a strong thing, for him; and the most sensible of engaged young women retired in tears to her room.

'There's one thing you must let me do,' Dalrymple was saying; 'if you don't I shall insist. You must let me have the privilege of sorting that scoundrel, Mark Hunt.'

'Matthew,' said Jack.

'Matthew, then. I knew it was one of your evangelists.'

'What would you do?' asked the Duke.

'See that he annoyed you no more. And I'll guarantee that he doesn't if you'll leave him to me.'

'I didn't want to clear them out'—

'I think you must.'

'Or to prosecute; it's so public, and a bit revengeful too.'

'There I agree with you. I'm not even sure that you'd get a conviction. It would be difficult, in any case, and would make a public scandal of it, as you say.'

'Then I will leave him to you. You're the smartest man I know, Mr Dalrymple, and always have been. What you do will be right. I'll bother my head no more about it. Besides, anything to keep you with us a few days longer!'

Dalrymple shrugged his shoulders; but Jack did not see the motion, for he was leading the way through the pines. A moment later they were at the hut.

The hut amused the squatter. He called it a colourable imitation. But it did not delight him as it had delighted Jack; the master bushman failed to share his old hand's sentimental regard for all that pertained to the bush. Dalrymple sat on the bunk and smoked a cigar, a cynical spectator of some simple passages between Jack and his cats. Livingstone was exploited with great pride; he had put on flesh in the old country; at which the squatter remarked that had he stayed on Carara he would have put on an ounce of lead.

'You're a wonderful man, Jack!' he exclaimed at length. 'I wouldn't have believed a fellow *could* take a windfall as you have done if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes. I used to think of you a good deal after you had gone. I thought of you playing the deuce to any extent, but I must say I little dreamt of your building a bush

hut to get back to your old way of life! I pictured the town crimson and the country carmine—both painted by you—but I never imagined *this*!

And he looked round the hut in his amused, sardonic way; but there was a ring—or perhaps it was only a suspicion—of disappointment in his tone. The next words were merely perplexed.

'And yet,' added Dalrymple, 'you profess yourself well pleased with your lot!'

'So I am, now.'

'I begin to wish I hadn't changed my mind about going this afternoon.'

'Why, on earth?'

'Because I also begin—to envy you! Come, let's make tracks for the house; I shall have huts enough to look at when I go back to the place that you need never see again.'

'But I mean to see it again,' said Jack as he looked up. 'I intend to take my wife out, one of these days; we shall expect to come on a long visit to Carara; and the greatest treat you could give me would be to let me ride my old boundaries and camp in my old hut for a week!'

'Nonsense; you stay where you are,' was the squatter's only comment. He seemed depressed; his cynical aplomb had quite deserted him. They returned in silence to the house.

A shabby-looking vehicle stood in front of the porch; the man said that he had brought a gentleman from Devenholme, and was to wait. The Duke and Dalrymple mounted the steps together. The first person they encountered in the hall was Claude Lafont, who looked strangely scared; but a new-comer was taking off his coat; and, as he turned his face, Dalrymple and Jack started simultaneously. Both knew the man. It was Cripps, the lawyer. And he, too, looked pale, nervous, and alarmed.

TALLIES.

By S. BARING-GOULD.

LAST November I put up for a night or two in a little tavern, that was also a bakehouse, at Avallés, in the Department of Vienne, in France. It is a little place, far from a railway, and reached only by a lumbering conveyance that carries mails and passengers; but letters and travellers are few and far between.

Our landlord was baker to the village or town, and the wife kept the inn. On our arrival the one large room that served as kitchen and reception-room was full of peasants in blue blouses, smoking, drinking wine, and arguing. I had had a wet and cold drive, and so I crept to the side of the fireplace to warm my benumbed fingers and dry my somewhat damp clothing.

While thus engaged I noticed hanging to the mantel-shelf two great bundles of sticks. On examining them I found that each rod was about eighteen inches long, and each was split up more than three-quarters of its length; that, moreover, at the handle was a name inscribed, and that the split portion was covered with notches. I confess that I was sorely puzzled over these sticks, and the hostess noticed my puzzlement. When the toasters and smokers were departed, she came to me and asked whether I understood what these sticks were. I said that I had not been able to

make them out. Then she told me that they were *tallies*, and that all the baker's accounts of the house were so kept.

Every customer was provided with a hazel stick split through the greater part of its length, and with his name written on the handle. The split-off piece of wood was retained by the customer, the principal stick by the baker. When the customer desired a loaf or two he came to the shop with his stick, it was placed in connection with the piece from which it had been originally taken, and then with a knife a notch was cut at the point of contact on one side, so as to mark both pieces of wood. When one side had been thus scored, then the score was carried down the other junction. As soon as the account was paid the tally-stick was thrust into the fire.

Such an account is absolutely reliable, no falsification on either side is possible.

I made my hostess give me a new tally-stick marked arbitrarily, and I brought it home with me. On my return, when showing the stick, to my surprise I learned that a farmer's wife in the place kept her account for butter and milk with a stick on which she cut notches, but in this instance the customer had no check.

That tally-sticks were at one time pretty general may be concluded from the derivation of the word *score*. In its original signification, a 'score' is a 'scar,' a cut made in a counting stick. So also a 'tally' is derived from the French *tailler*.

The Roman numerals are derived from scores. They were mere notches cut in wood originally. The V for five was a rude representation of the outspread hand, and the X in like manner symbolised all ten fingers; the IV was a comparatively late innovation; originally the IV was represented by four strokes or notches, as in clock-dials.

The old Celtic alphabet—the Ogham writing—was of very similar, nay, identical nature. It consisted of notches cut at the corner of a square stone, or else from a stem-line. The letters B, L, F, S, N, are formed by cutting strokes at right angles to the stem-line on the right hand, and the letters H, D, T, C, Q, by strokes at right angles to the left. Thus a single stroke to the right is B, and to the left is H, two to the right is L, and the same number to the left is D. Three to one side is F, three to the other is T. Long strokes, numbering from one to five, cutting the stem diagonally, expressed M, G, Ng, St, R, and short strokes, numbering from one to five, cutting across the stem at right angles, give the vowels.

It is easy to see that the tally-stick was used for numbers before the alphabet was thought of by our Celtic forefathers. Having proved the tally-stick valuable for accounts, they applied it for writing messages on rods and memorials on tombs.

The old Runic staves for calendars were somewhat similar. Strange symbols were introduced to mark the several festivals, but the days were indicated by notches.

Formerly in the Court of Exchequer all accounts were kept, and in the House of Commons records of elections, much as Robinson Crusoe kept his calendar on the desert island, on notched sticks; the wood employed was elm. In the reign of George III. an inquiry was made into the matter, and the suggestion offered that the accounts might be made for the future on paper

and with pens. But it was not till 1826 that the tally-sticks were abolished. In 1834 it was found that there were vast piles of these bundles of old rods, worn out, worm-eaten, and absolutely worthless any longer. They were preserved at Westminster, and the order was given that they should be consumed in the stove in the House of Lords. The stove, overheated by these dry sticks, set fire to the panelling, the panelling set fire to the House of Lords, the House of Lords set fire to the House of Commons, and the two houses were reduced to ashes.

The use of *notch-sticks* or *nick-sticks* continued in Scotland till the beginning of the present century, especially among the bakers; and they were used even later in Yorkshire.

We still use the verb *to tally*, in the sense of agreement in two statements or accounts, and this leads us back to the old counting sticks when the customer placed his portion of the rod in juxtaposition with that retained by the dealer, and the *tailles*, the notches on one matched the notches on the other. This was an ocular demonstration that the account was correct, which could not be controverted. How hard it is for a rude mind to work out a simple account may be seen from a story told by Sir F. Galton of one of his experiences among the Damara of South Africa. Current coin there was represented by cakes of tobacco, and two cakes were the recognised market price of a sheep. Mr Galton bought two sheep, and put down at once four pieces of tobacco. The Damara eyed the proffered pieces with a puzzled face, and could not understand that two and two make four till he had placed two pieces of tobacco before one wether and the other two pieces in front of the other. Then only was it clear to him that he had received right payment.

It is a curious consideration how much of early custom remains with us in trace, that trace being left in the language. The shepherd still counts by the score though he has long ceased to mark with a notch, and we still speak of accounts tallying though we have long ago discarded the stick.

THE MILLER OF BOLARQUE.

By GABRIELA C. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM.

'Yes, sir,' the miller was saying, 'tis a fine place the convent of Bolarque. Few strangers come to see it; but the rare ones who do have told me that, of all the monasteries in Spain, it is the best preserved. You saw the chapter-house this morning and the friars' cells and the church. Not a stick has been moved, not a stone pulled away, not even a nail from the doors, since the friars went. It's a long story, sir; but my father and my grandfather before me were born and bred in this old mill, as I was too. The mill belonged to the convent, and my grandfather was the convent miller. When the friars left, my grandfather swore solemnly that he would guard it for them, and on his deathbed my father swore the same, and I was not going to disgrace my blood by doing anything different. Yes, I have been often sore put to it—many a time on the

cold December nights I have thought of the old rafters rotting and mouldering there, when it would have only taken a few strokes with an axe to get enough wood to keep an honest man warm for the whole winter. But no! I said to Maria (that's my wife) I would rather chop off my right hand than chop that wood! Be sure it would bring us harm! Many a time have I wanted a few nails or iron to repair the mill; and it's many a weary league to the town, as you know, sir, and it seemed a sin to have all that iron rusting and useless up there; but I would have let the mill rot into the Tagus before I would have taken it! That is why, sir, the convent is still a convent as you see to-day, and not a ruin. And my son, the lad you saw just now—yes! a fine handsome boy enough!—when he takes the mill in his turn, will do the same. The convent of Bolarque was entrusted to my grandfather. The last words the prior said to him were to preserve it and keep it for the friars' coming, and so we have done, and so we shall do, as long as one of our name is left.'

The miller was silent, thinking, perhaps, of old forgotten things—to the lapping of the water beneath, for the kitchen was built on piles, and jutted out far into the river—to the lapping of the water which, like human beings, is ever flowing to oblivion.

I, too, held my peace. I saw the convent again as I had seen it in the morning, as I still see it if I shut my eyes, whitening in the sun amidst the almond trees on the terraced slopes which, rising to the sky above in a tangled undergrowth of corkwood, died into the shore of the broad and boiling Tagus at the bottom.

'What strange things it would tell us if stones could speak,' I said, without intention, in that strange listlessness of mood which makes a man say anything to break silence.

'Yes, sir!' said the miller, 'strange things. Even the old mill, too, if it could speak, would tell some secrets. But my grandfather was the one who could have told you all the stories. He had been about the convent from a boy, and the friars trusted him as one of themselves. Even to this day, I, Ramon Buendía, as you see me here, am the only living man who knows where the convent jewels and the sacred vessels lie hidden, still waiting for their rightful owners to claim them. He was a good man (*muy hombre de bien*) my grandfather, and he would have bit his tongue in two and spit it out rather than break his faith, and that the friars knew right well.'

'How was that?' I said. 'I thought the decree of expulsion was so sudden and so secret that the monks had no time to move or change anything.'

'Yes; but in this case they had,' said the miller, and his eyes twinkled, 'and it was all my grandfather's doing. The very day before they were turned out—it was not often that he did so—he went into the town—it was market-day—to

sell some olives for the friars. When he got into the plaza he noticed that there was some stir about the Casa Consistorial, and he also noticed flitting in and out certain strangers whom he had never seen before. It was not like as it is now when, if one goes into the town, most of the people one sees are unknown to one. In those days my grandfather knew every face in the town, and could pick out a stranger at once. Now some rumours of what was about to happen had got to my grandfather's ears, as it had to those of others. Everybody laughed at them and paid but little heed; but the look of these strangers and the unusual stir about the Casa Consistorial set him a-thinking. So what does he do but leaves his olives and goes straight to the Alcalde, who was, I may tell you, a great friend of my father's and a great friend of the prior's, for never a summer went by but he came to Bolarque to hunt and shoot in the sierras and the cork woods above the convent, those same you saw this morning. They weren't straggling scrub in those days, sir, but great oak forests, and worth a mint of money. The ministers in Madrid cut them down, and sold them for an old song. Ay! there were plenty lined their pockets in those days, sir! Well! as I was saying, he found the Alcalde busy signing one paper after another, and as he signed, he handed them to a strange man whom my grandfather had never seen before, who stood beside him. When he went in, the Alcalde turned round, and without recognising him or returning his salute, asked curtly what he wanted. My grandfather was rather puzzled at this, for the Alcalde was one of the kindest of men, and as I have said they were great friends. Now my grandfather had a quick brain, and instead of taking offence he was the more convinced that something serious was on hand. So thinking to himself "Aqui hay gato encerrado" ("there is something underneath this"), he answered that he had come about some important business, and that, if only for one moment, he must speak alone with the Alcalde.

"The Alcalde said something to the stranger. What it was my grandfather knew not; but the man gathered up the papers and went out.

"When they were alone, the Alcalde, who was unusually troubled, got up and went to the door. He listened a moment and then locked it—so gently that the key scarce clicked in the lock. Then he went to his desk and wrote something, not more than three words, and beckoned to my grandfather to come close.

"*"Ramon,"* he whispered—for it seemed as if he were afraid of the sound of his voice—"Ramon, get the fastest horse you can and ride back to Bolarque as if your life depended on it. Deliver this to the prior himself; every moment is needed. Nay, man, do not speak, but go!"

"But I have over a quintal of olives to sell for the friars lying in the market-place," said my grandfather.

"*"Que olivas! Ni que olivas!"* The devil take the olives!" answered the Alcalde. "To-morrow there will be neither prior nor friars at Bolarque!"

"My grandfather understood, and without another word, in less time than it takes to tell this,

he was on his mule and on the way to Bolarque, riding like a madman, leaving the friars' olives lying in the sun in the plaza in the place where he had left them.

"Ride as he liked, it was night before he got to the mill, and, as you know, it is full a quarter of a league from the mill to the convent. He had had neither bite nor sup all day, and when he saw the red lights gleaming from the casements of the mill he was faint with thirst and hunger. As he clattered past the dogs barked, and he heard his wife's voice calling to them. Nevertheless, on he went to the convent. My grandfather could scarcely believe that it was he who was battering on the doors of the monastery in that unseemly way—he, Ramon Buendia, to whom it was the most sacred place in the world. He had some difficulty in getting admittance—not until the lay friar withdrew the shutter from the grating and saw for himself that it was my grandfather and no other. Even then there was a parley, for it was against the discipline to open the doors to any at that hour of the night unless justified by extreme necessity, and my grandfather was forced to explain that he had come on an errand of life and death before a bolt was withdrawn.

"The prior was reading in his cell. It was a hot summer's evening. The casement was open, and the noise of the river came through it, and one could see the stars twinkling down in the black waters below. My grandfather saw all this in a glint of the eye, and I have heard him tell, how, in the moment he stood there facing the prior, he heard all the noises one hears on such a night as if his ears had become sharpened—the creaking of the branches of the almond tree which stood against the casement, the crackling of the dried grass as a snake glided through it, nay, he said he heard the almond blossoms fall as a great heavy-winged bat flew into the cell and out again.

"When the prior read the message he stood for a moment like one stunned. He did not speak, but my grandfather heard him whisper softly, as if to himself, three words, "*Fiat voluntas Tua!*" They were Latin words, it seems, for my grandfather never rested afterwards until he got them translated to him by the Cura of Ajatafe.

"Then in a moment it seemed to my grandfather that the whole convent was in commotion. The clanging of bells drowned the noise of the waters. Friars were hurrying hither and thither. The peaceful cloisters were alive with motion, although he rather felt than heard it. A lay brother came in and laid before him wine and food in the prior's own cell, and waited until he had eaten. Then, for my grandfather was like one in a dream, what with his long ride and terror of the strange things that seemed to be menacing his friends and masters, he found himself—he knew not how—in the chapter-house of the convent.

"You stood to-day on the precise spot where he stood that night. If he thought he was dreaming before he was sure he dreamed now. The stone seats which line the walls on either side were filled with a double file of monks. There they sat, motionless and silent, each in his order of priority, in the great vaulted chamber, and the red light of the cressets, as it flickered here and there into the darkness, seemed to make it more terrifying, and the chapter-house vaster and stranger than he had ever seen it before. At the

farther end the prior sat in his canopied stall, under the image of San Juan de la Cruz. It, too, seemed to have grown larger, and my grandfather swore to his dying day that the wooden figure was gigantic and awful, as if it, too, felt the horror of what was about to happen. There they all sat, their white cowls drawn over their faces, and as the lights from the cressets burnt very dimly and uncertainly, it was an uncanny sight—you would have said they were ghosts.

'Then the prior spoke, and his words echoed through the vaulted roof. My grandfather could have told you what he said, word for word—as for me, my memory is short for these things; but when he had finished there was a great silence which terrified my grandfather more than if they had broken out into weeping and lamentation.

'When the prior left his seat, and, kneeling before the image of San Juan de la Cruz, took up some earth from the pavement and scattered it on his head, the silence was so profound that you could have heard the breathing of every monk there.

'Then he beckoned to my grandfather to come near. Beside his stall lay a sack which my grandfather had not noticed before because of the darkness.

“Ramon Buendia,” said the prior, “our good and faithful servant, in this sack are all the ornaments and sacred vessels of this our Church of our Lady of Bolarque. By full consent of the community here in chapter assembled, we entrust them to you. It is the wish of the chapter, and we charge it to you on your soul, that to-morrow, before daybreak, they be deposited with our good friend, the Cura of Ajatafe, in whose care and fidelity we have every trust. He will guard and take charge of them until we ourselves return to claim them. My son, your work is not yet done! It is a long night's ride to Ajatafe! It is the last service you can do for the prior and monks of Bolarque, for to-morrow they will be gone!”

'When my grandfather heard this he fell a-weeping, and knelt and kissed the prior's hands and the cord of his habit, as if he was taking leave of the dead, as so indeed he was. The prior raised his hands and blessed him. As he went down the chapter-house, passing between the rows of stricken monks, each brother rose and gave him his silent benediction. If it was the most grievous, so it was the proudest moment of my grandfather's life.

'A lay brother helped him to load the sack on to the mule, and with a heavy heart, but a resolute one, my grandfather started on his ride. When he got past the mill he took a path in the hills that few knew except himself, for the lay brother had warned him that the authorities were already on the way to the convent, and might arrive at any moment. The path was rough and stony, and the mule was tired, and stumbled at every step under the heavy load of the sack. My grandfather “swallowed drops of blood” that night, the longest one he ever passed. If the mule shied at a bush, my grandfather's heart leapt into his mouth. Once he could have sworn that black objects were moving towards him on the road that looked like men, but they were only donkeys belonging to some charcoal burners, who had fallen asleep beside their fire. However, the last star was still twinkling in the sky, and the dawn

was just breaking clear and cold over the hills when he found himself safe in the curate's house of Ajatafe, and the treasures in safe keeping.

'When he returned on the morrow the friars were gone. All his life he waited for them to come back, but they have not returned yet. And I, his grandson, am still waiting, and when they come I shall hand over their convent to them—almost intact, as you see—and the church ornaments, which are still held in trust for them at Ajatafe.'

And the river lapped the piles on which stood the kitchen, as it hurried on to oblivion, past the mill and the deserted convent still waiting for its owners.

WATER-LILIES.

How like yon water-lily fair
Is my true love! In her I find
Both in body and in mind
Spotless purity combined
With beauty rare.

Somewhat like a lily too
Am I! Ah now a merry cry
Rings from her laughing lips 'Fie, fie!'
Yet listen, Saucy One, and I
Will prove it true.

'Tis not for pow'r to charm or please,
'Tis not for comeliness of face,
For purity like thine, or grace;
God knows I have but little trace
Of such as these!

But this is why—Though from her boat
White-rigged upon the waters still
The lily dips and drinks at will,
That she can never quaff her fill
Is plain to note.

For when the fleecy cloud light whirls
The raindrops down, her leaves unfold
Like sails, and in her bosom's hold
She loves to store amid the gold
The dewy pearls.

Though deep her roots like anchors trend
Where life and sustenance abide,
With water round, below, beside,
Her thirst unslaked, unsatisfied
Still knows no end.

Thus then, sweet lily-love, am I
Like to this ever-thirsting flower—
The more the love that thou dost shower
On me, the more my will and power
To drink thee dry.

To quaff of love, for maids and men
Doth seem I vow but foolish waste:
The more the thirsty creatures taste
The greater is their panting haste
To quaff again.

WILL HILL.

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A WEST HIGHLAND RIVER.

EVERY votary of the rod has, doubtless, his favourite loch or stream, to which he is attached by recollections of pleasant days of successful sport or early association, the 'good' hours by grassy bank or sheltered bay blotting out with kindly veil all memory of the bad or indifferent ones, and the sunlit mists of boyhood and youth enveloping with tender mantle the times of varying fortune which fall to the lot of all brethren of the angle.

The dry-fly fisher of the Hampshire chalk stream thinks lovingly perhaps of the delicate art which must lure the wary and lusty trout from its crystal waters. The centenarian angler of Tweed's noble river recalls with fond recollection the halcyon days of sixty years ago or more when 'record' baskets could be made, and netting, pollution, and poaching (at least in its latter-day forms) were but of trivial moment. And the hardy Highlander of the north or west pictures to himself his ideal of what a river should be—bold, rugged, and turbulent as his own ancestry were among their native mountains two hundred years ago. They are all entirely different in character, these angling waters, and each has features distinctively its own. The typical English trout stream, clear, sedgy, slow-moving towards the sea: the Scottish Lowland river, now swift and brawling, now deep, rippling, and slow, with its long pools and runs sweeping under the flat grassy banks, and brushing the overhanging tree stems, or margined by level bays of gravel or fine sand. But both of them are subdued and peaceful compared with the Highland torrent—loud-voiced, impetuous, black, and rocky, with pool of ominous swirl and depth, as it rushes headlong from its mountain fastnesses to pour those turbid waters into some hill-girt sea-loch or sounding bay of the Atlantic seaboard.

I do not know the mysteries of the English chalk stream, but I have fond recollections of the trouting qualities of many of the waters of southern Scotland, and they have undoubtedly

a charm which specially belongs to themselves. Their yellow trout are more numerous, and probably better shaped, better fed, and attain a heavier weight than any other in Scotland; their surroundings are peculiarly attractive to the lover of the peaceful and the pastoral; and they are deeply interwoven with Border legend and story.

Yet to the seeker after the impressive in nature, and the fisherman who delights in wild and rugged accompaniments to his sport, a typical Highland salmon river possesses unrivalled attractions and a grandeur and majesty of colour and motion which belong to itself alone. Such a river is that which I wish to describe.

It has its ultimate fountainhead and source amid the snows and mists of that wild region which surrounds the Moor of Rannoch and holds within it the higher peaks of the famous Black Mount Deer Forest and the desolate wastes stretching up to the mountains of Glen Etive and Glencoe. With a vast gathering-ground or basin, its waters are first of all confined in isolated loch and rugged pass, guarded on one side by steep, black, stony hills—yet relieved in their sternness here and there by tender green grass, brown bracken, and silver-streaked waterfall; and on the other by the granite base of a noble mountain, whose double-peaked cones rise nearly four thousand feet above it. Then, with a gathering rush, it pours its waters in a solid column of black and white, through precipitous gorge and narrow valley, over boulder and rock, and by tree-shaded grass-grown bank, in four swift miles to the sea—a series of wide dark pools, roaring cataracts, and deep, silent runs, beloved of the salmon as he comes, fresh coated in silver scale, from his salt home below. Verily, in every sense, a noble Highland river, of wild yet graceful sweep and immense volume, and with surroundings of mountain and wood, rock and heather, which it would be hard to surpass.

As to its fishing qualities, which after all is the first and absolute test in the mind of the angler, this can be said. It holds in its depths salmon of herculean proportions and weight, some up to

fifty pounds, while fish of from thirty to forty-five pounds are not uncommon, but alas! they cannot often be taken! Yet the average of the fish is distinctly high for a river of its course, while grilse up to nine and ten pounds are plentiful. Sea trout also of excellent average weight are numerous in summer, and in autumn the lively and sportive 'finnock' or herling—averaging from a half to three quarters of a pound, and giving excellent sport on a small rod and fine tackle; while an occasional good yellow trout of two to three pounds is to be caught, although this is not essentially a yellow trout stream.

But beyond and in addition to these qualities, it has distinctly this one—salmon fishing in its waters is by no means an arm-chair pastime. To hook a strong and lively fish of from twenty to twenty-five pounds, fresh-run from the sea, from an insecure foothold on a jutting rock or the light staging of a single plank, to see him dash for the rapid foaming current, taking sixty or seventy yards of line from your reel at one arrow-like rush, and then to play him safely over granite boulder in mid-stream, or rocky headland far below you, following him down river over a perilous way of steep bank and stone-strewn shore, requires both nerve and skill, and a considerable amount of physical agility. But it is withal an exhilarating experience, worth going some distance to find, and very different in character from the fishing of the long flat pool and broad boat of the great waterways of Scotland or Ireland.

Needless to say, on such a river, and with fish of this high class, nothing but fly-fishing should be permitted, and in one instance at least this rule is rigidly adhered to. Trout fishing with worm, up stream, and in clear water and bright sunshine, with a light rod and the finest of tackle is an *art*, but to kill the lordly salmon with a bunch of worms, a pickled prawn, or other ignoble lure, is surely to put the higher gifts of Nature to the baser use!

Like most rivers, this one has, however, its varying moods and also its varying seasons, and its good and bad years. At times it can delight the angler's heart with the freedom of its rising fish fresh-run from the sea; at other times, sullen and unresponsive, it will sink his hopes to zero, or aggravate them to the breaking point of endurance by showing its leaping monsters or playful grilse in every pool, over which, however, he may cast his choicest fly and try his finest art in vain!

The season of 1896 was, unfortunately, one of the heart-breaking, soul-disturbing order. You had but to watch a favourite pool to see the larger fish, many of them probably over thirty pounds in weight, rising slowly like porpoises, their back fins showing curved and black as they cleft the water, while the grilse leapt high in the air and made their 'plash' resound above the roar of the stream; but even the deftest and most cunning hand might often fish over them day after day without any tangible result. They might surge up to look at his fly and even touch it for the briefest of moments, but there their affection for the gaudy floating thing only too frequently ended, and seldom indeed would they come to look at it twice. Those who knew the river best were most puzzled to account for this state of things. It could not be the netting at the mouth, for there

were plenty of fish in all the favourite casts, and the river was often in the best of angling trim, but still the fish did not come as they ought! Therefore it could only be that much abused element (which frequently carries so heavy a load of responsibility and anathema) 'the weather,' which, during the fishing season, was either fiery, unsettled, close, and generally unsatisfactory, or consisting of continuous rain, particularly in autumn, bringing down the water in floods and making it for a long time practically unfishable. That had, therefore, to be accepted as the solution, or else the problem remained an insoluble mystery.

The spring months are sometimes good, and last year were probably better than the rest of the season, but the summer time is always counted on as the best, and from the middle of June until the end of July may be deemed the cream of the year. On the best part of the river, however, the season of 1896 produced, during that time, something under forty fish as against from seventy to a hundred fish in a good year. Yet among the fish caught were one or two specially fine specimens of the genus *Salmo salar*, including one of forty-five pounds killed by a well-known angler.

It is now exactly eighteen years since I fished this good stream for the first time, and well I remember it. We thought of nothing higher or better than trout in those days, and were always more than well pleased if we killed a pounder in the course of the day. It was the beginning of September and it had rained continuously for the better part of two days and two nights before, so that the river was in heavy flood when we saw it first and rolled down in majestic volume to the sea, looking, to us, quite unfishable. Yet it was only very slightly coloured, and the afternoon was brightening up beautifully, and so we began with a 'yellow and teal' sea trout fly of small size and a 'black body and blue wing' of the same. Our weapon was but an eleven foot rod bent with light tackle and a free running reel, and, in the heavy water, it was grand sport certainly when the two-pounder sea trout came, as come they did in royal style. But darkness fell at last, and we staggered homeward under a heavy 'creel' (we have never had as heavy a trout one since) to the old 'Stage Coach Inn' and a late dinner. There was something over thirty-six pounds of trout to two rods for that afternoon's fishing, and a rather heavier basket under the same conditions on the following day—all fresh run fish from the sea, bright as silver, and strong and lively, even wild, when hooked. But these days come not often in a lifetime to the average fisherman of the stream, and when they do they must always live as pleasant memories in after years.

Now eighteen years have passed, and, through the kindness of a friend, we revisit this West Highland river once more, with some hopes of adding the lordly salmon to our basket. The best of the season is now well over, but even yet we may find the king of the wave inclined to satisfy the cravings of his instinctive curiosity with a salmon-fly. Well, some days are consumed in fruitless flogging of the stream, and we are unable even to 'raise' a fish. But at last and unexpectedly a sudden (but alas! momentary) change comes. It had been a fine morning but now the sky was overcast and a few drops of rain fell. We had put on, after trying several other well-

known and favourite flies (the 'Thunder and Lightning,' the 'Blue Doctor,' and I think also either the 'Black Doctor' or the 'Butcher'), a 'Heron Wing' with roughly-dressed claret body—when lo! in three successive casts in one pool we hooked three several fish. Two of them were played down stream through the rough water and over the huge boulders (which stood below the pool as danger posts to be carefully negotiated), and at last were safely gaffed by the eager but cautious Donald, and brought to bank—the one a well-shaped fish of seventeen pounds and the other a strong, lively grilse of eight pounds net. The third, and, of course, according to the recognised rule, 'much the heaviest fish' we never, alas! saw. He rose at the tail of the pool, taking the fly under the water, and, without a moment's hesitation, dashed straight up the centre of the pool near to the strong eddy or current of white, foaming water which rolled in at the top. What happened afterwards is only surmise. But the strain of a strong, pulling, heavy fish never seemed to slacken for an instant, only he came to a dead stop somewhere in the deep water, and nothing would move him from there, although all the artifices known to the fisherman were successively tried. In the final result the twisted gut casting line or trace broke in our fruitless efforts to dislodge him, and there was an end of all things! But we were not dissatisfied, and with some lively sea trout of well on to a pound to make up and vary the basket, we were fain to wend our way homeward toward the welcome dog-cart waiting for us at the old bridge below, as the shades of evening were gathering over the Ben above us, and the sun was sinking in a blaze of purple and orange in the west, while the distant hill-tops stood out clear and defined in the blue sky, now swept of mist and rain-cloud.

Perhaps our sport was not great after all, when compared with that of many who can boast their ten and twelve salmon in a day, but there is such a thing as a superfluity of good things, and contentment is the secret of happiness. And we were content, despite our natural sorrow for the lost 'big one,' and only wished we might always fare as well on that 'West Highland river.'

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER II.

ONE more incident in connection with Inkermann—that battle of the Titan Thomas Atkins—and I have done with the Crimea, which is, I know, a hackneyed subject, and must not be dwelt upon at any length.

Young Dostoief had been carried safely to the rear; the Russian commander-in-chief had disposed his forces; the two Grand Dukes had encouraged the troops of the Tsar by riding in and out, and saluting all and sundry arms of the service; the English, on the top of their hill, had made some little preparation for resisting attacks upon their position, and the great battle began. This fight of Inkermann was a magnificent 'scrimmage,' for it was at times little else; yet for all that, scrimmage, or Homeric battle, or whatever the historian may prefer to call it, it was nevertheless one of the grandest fights that British troops ever took a hand in. It was

Tommy Atkins' own particular battle, for his officers played a comparatively small part in the fray; and Thomas, on that great day, withstood, by sheer pluck and perseverance, the determined attacks of column after column of the enemy's picked troops, who outnumbered him as twenty to one. Not that the Russians fought ill! on the contrary, they struggled bravely enough; but Tommy had placed himself at the top of a steep hill, and regiment after regiment climbed that hill under fire and almost reached the top where brave Thomas stood and peppered at him, only to quaver and double-up, out of breath and demoralised, and to turn and run at the last moment.

Among the Russian troops engaged, on that memorable 5th of November, in giving Tommy Atkins his innings at Inkermann was a certain regiment known as the Okhotsk, in which regiment one Alexander Philipof enjoyed the rank of captain. The Okhotsk had, during the early part of the day, attempted more than once to climb the steep ascent at the crest of which was the British position, and, like the rest of those who made the attempt, had been beaten back with loss, unable to withstand the energetic reception that Mr Atkins was ever ready to offer to all visitors from below. Shortly before midday a column of the Okhotsk had just retreated pell-mell down the hill for the third time and the officers were busy redressing the ranks and haranguing the men in preparation for a fourth attempt. This was a column of close upon one thousand men, and these had succumbed, when near the top, to a determined charge of one hundred and twenty soldiers of the Guards, who, finding that the Russians had approached rather closer to their position than they considered advisable, had flung themselves down-hill upon the mass and overwhelmed the poor panting Russian soldiers by sheer bounce and bluffing. The Russian officers, and chief among them young Philipof, were furious, and eloquently sarcastic as they strove to awaken their men to the shame of their thrice-repeated defeat, and abuse and strong language were the order of the day. The poor Okhotsk lay or stood about, panting and puffing, and wiping the sweat from their faces; they listened to their officers but paid very little heed to their threats and abuse, for the Russian soldier is half-sheep and half-philosopher, and wild talking does not impose upon him. He is unlike a sheep in that he is as brave as a man need be; but like the sheep he will follow the leader whether into danger or out of it, and if one man turns and runs it is probable that the rest will do the same; but having run away, or achieved his end, or indeed whatever may have happened, he will not be greatly disturbed, because he is a fatalist; and therefore he philosophically concludes that, it having been the will of Providence that this or that has occurred, nothing else could have happened, and therefore it is unnecessary to be either elated or discouraged or any otherwise than perfectly calm and contented.

On this occasion Captain Philipof certainly did his best to startle his sweating, panting philosophers into renewed energy and a sense of shame. He had done his utmost to save the column from the humiliation of retreat. He had sworn at and

even struck the men of his own company at the first indication of a desire to run, but all in vain; and as he now stood upon a mound, drawn sword in hand, abusing and haranguing his men preparatory to forming line for a new attack, he was a very angry person indeed, and doubtless used language which he would have been ashamed to own to in moments of calm.

'Now, listen, you sons of dogs!' he shouted. 'The column will immediately receive orders to renew the attack. Let the others do as they please, but my *sotnia* (hundred) shall not turn tail again before these beggarly English. I swear to you that the first coward who turns and runs this time shall have one of my revolver bullets to carry down hill with him. You know me, sons of dogs that you are; I shall do what I say. I can hit a man as well as most!' As a matter of fact Philipof was an extremely good shot with his revolver, and the men knew it.

A very few moments after this threat had left the angry captain's lips, orders came for the column to start once again upon its fatal up-hill journey. Away it went, colours fluttering; men singing their stirring songs as only the Russian soldiers can sing them; and a huge *ikon* held aloft in the midst by way of benediction upon the effort about to be made. Up the hill it went, a determined-looking host and formidable withal; up the hill and into view of our brave guardsmen, who greeted it, as usual, with much cheering and with a murderous fire from such of their rifles as had anything in them, most of the ammunition having been used up before this.

This time the brave Okhotsk would take no denial, but came steadily on and on in spite of the fire, on and upwards until the head of the huge column had reached within a very few yards of our plucky little band of guardsmen. These latter, receiving no support from behind, and having burned most of their powder, began slowly to lose ground, contesting every inch of it, however; those who had thrown down their useless rifles fighting like Homeric heroes with stones and bits of rock and anything they could lay hands upon. It was just at this critical moment that the noise of cheering and the tramp of footsteps from the rear indicated to the struggling guardsmen engaged with the enemy that assistance was at hand, and that others would arrive in a moment to share the glory of turning this big Russian column, and sending it flying down the hill after its predecessors. This, Tommy Atkins felt, would never do; inspired by the knowledge that support was near in case of absolute need, and at the same time determined if possible to do without it, the brave defenders pulled themselves together. 'Charge again, boys!' some one bawled, and grasping sword or bayonet more tightly and setting teeth and muscle, these tough fellows sprang forward once more full in the face of the advancing Russians, and in a moment the little band was in and among the writhing masses of the Muscovite column, stabbing, striking, firing, cheering, and in many cases fighting with their fists only.

As seemed the rule on this extraordinary day, the huge mass was unable to withstand the spirited attack of the few; it tottered, wavered a moment, then broke and fled down-hill.

Many of the English soldiers did not fail to

notice the conduct of one handsome Russian officer; indeed, so frantic was this individual and so energetic in trying to keep his men up to the mark, that his behaviour caused a good deal of laughter among the light-hearted Britons. This officer—who seemed half-mad with excitement—was, as some one expressed it, for all the world like a Jack-in-the-box, simultaneously here and there and everywhere, alternately swearing at and entreating his men to be firm, threatening them with sword and pistol, shouting, waving his arms and his sword, laughing and crying in turns. This was Alexander Philipof, who appeared to wear a charmed life, exposing himself a hundred times to the enemy's bullets without receiving hurt or harm. Possibly his excitement so amused Mr Atkins that the latter forgot to shoot him down. At any rate Philipof waved his arms and shouted himself hoarse with impunity. 'Now, Okhotsk! Now, Okhotsk!' he yelled: 'the Tsar's sons are watching us—down with the English dogs—forward!'

The idea of the Tsar's sons watching from below had probably been dinned into the ears of the poor puffing Russian soldiers all day; nevertheless, their presence did not avail to win the fight for their imperial father. On the contrary, no sooner had Philipof mentioned the Tsar's sons, and the necessity to show a bold front in consideration of the presence of their imperial highnesses, than the column showed unmistakable signs of breaking, as it had broken three times already this day. First one man turned, then another, then half-a-dozen, then the rest, and in a moment the column was in retreat.

The first offender was a big black-browed, white-faced fellow, a typical Russian soldier to look at, expressionless and dirty, but lowering savagely when angered. This man had suddenly thrown down his musket, spat—à la Russe—towards the British lines, and then turned and started off at a trot down-hill, the rest following him.

But the offender had not proceeded more than a couple of yards when Alexander Philipof's bullet whizzed through his cheek, and with a fearful oath he brought up.

'You dog!' yelled the officer, frantic with rage, 'like a dog you shall die! Okhotsk, be men! stand firm with me!' So saying, Philipof fired a second shot at the coward, not waiting, however, to note its effect, and facing quickly round, discharged the remaining bullets of his revolver into the advancing English ranks. A few of those who had begun to fall back faced about when he did, and formed in line with Philipof, while the man whom he had wounded sat, or fell down in his place swearing and bleeding, and looking in his rage like a very demon.

On came the cheering, fighting British; and one of the first to be struck down was Philipof, who received a pretty severe wound. Of the few who had stood firm with him there was not one who was not wounded or taken prisoner; and among those taken was the dark-visaged private, who with the rest was sent to the rear, and attended to in the Balaklava field-hospital, where, to the amusement of the British surgeons, he appeared to care nothing whatever for his own wound, or for their probing and dressing of it, his whole attention being obviously devoted to the

case of one of his officers who was treated in the same tent, and was very much more severely wounded than himself. From this officer's face the wounded private never once took his eyes, even while his own hurt was being dressed, but only glared and muttered in a way that surprised and amused his kind attendants, who were pleased to observe the devotion of the Russian soldiery to their officers, but a little astonished at their way of showing it.

'He seems precious angry about something,' remarked Headley, a young army surgeon; 'I suppose he's riled that our fellows wounded his favourite officer: thinks nothing of this hole in his face, which must be painful enough too!'

'Very pretty devotion, I call it,' said Briggs, his senior; 'see they're put in the same tent, Headley, if the fellow is so fond of his officer. What a mug though, eh? Glad he's not fond of me—I should be afraid he'd want to eat me!'

And so it happened that wounded Philipof was placed in the same ward with Petka Gorbunof, private of his own regiment, the hole in whose cheeks had been drilled by Philipof's own bullet. There was a third Russian in the same tent, an old sergeant who had stood by Philipof when that officer rallied a few of his men, preferring death to repeated scuttling. This patriarchal old soldier was not very severely wounded, though the knock on the head from the butt of a British rifle which floored him had left his wits somewhat muddled. What remained of his intelligence, however, sufficed to fill old Anton's faithful heart with satisfaction when he realised that he was to be left in company of his favourite captain, Philipof, who was a great friend of his, and to see whom so sorely smitten was a grief to the old man.

Petka Gorbunof, or 'Black Petka' as he was called by his fellow-soldiers, was glad also to be quartered with his captain; but then he was animated by other motives than affection for Philipof and the desire to see him through his troubles. Briggs and Headley had made a little mistake as to this!

COMMON CARNIVOROUS PLANTS.

SCATTERED over the moors of Scotland, and of many parts of England, and again over many of the sandy dunes lying low close to the sea, those barren stretches which are the delight and home of the golfer, thousands of small plants may be seen, nestling snugly amid the mosses and grass close to the soil. In spring little points of light green can be observed pushing through the earth, and gradually expanding into rosettes of eight to twelve pointed leaves, of which the older and outer ones are in close contact with the ground, the inner and younger pointed upwards. Towards the end of May a slender flower-stalk rises from the centre of the rosette crowned with a small violet flower, of a graceful shape, and bearing a posterior spur.

If you were to pull up one of these plants—they are called the Common Butterworts—and to look more closely at the leaves, you would see that they were velvety in appearance, and if held so that the sunlight fell on them obliquely, covered with hundreds of small glistening points. With the aid of an

ordinary magnifying glass the appearance presented by the surface of the leaf is remarkably beautiful. Through the glass, too, each glistening point can be seen to be a minute drop of fluid resting on the top of a short projecting portion of the leaf. These little projections may be readily divided into two classes, the one with short stalks and small heads, the other, not nearly so numerous, with larger heads supported on longer pedicels. Both classes are, in reality, small glands.

If you have sufficient leisure and are interested in these wonderful little plants, an examination of a number of them, as they are growing in the soil, will repay you. If you examine, say twenty plants, you will probably find that quite a half of them, if not more, have small dead insects or particles of pollen adhering to their leaves.

They are, in fact, plants which have adapted themselves through the course of long ages for the purpose of supplementing the scanty nourishment afforded by the peaty or sandy soil on which they grow, by extracting from the bodies of insects or from the grains of pollen entangled in the drops of secretion, the additional food required. They can grow and reach maturity when such additional food is kept from them, but they wax stronger and are more fruitful when they can manage to procure it. The reason why they have developed the power of thus extracting nourishment from insects, a power very unlike that possessed by most vegetables, seems to be explained by the poorness of the soil which is their usual habitation. All living things require a certain proportion of the element nitrogen in their food; and the same phenomenon occurs in the butterworts when they obtain bodies containing that element from insects, as when a farmer reaps an increased harvest of wheat after adding nitrates or sulphate of ammonia to the soil. Peaty, boggy, or sandy soils are deficient in substances yielding nitrogen, and Nature has taught such plants as the butterwort how to obtain it in another way.

As you continue to walk over the moorland at some of the moister spots, especially those covered with mosses, you may be fortunate enough to come across another small plant, smaller even than the butterwort. It is not so widely spread over the moorland, but generally grows in colonies in the damper spots. This little plant is not at first at all easy of identification. If one is found, however, you may be sure that others are close at hand. Close down on the ground a small star-shaped plant is seen. Its leaves are arranged similarly to those of the butterwort, but here the resemblance ceases; for most people if shown a single leaf would think it a flower. At the end of a slender leaf-stalk a circular, thin blade is placed, bearing numerous tentacles of a bright red colour, those in the centre of the leaf being short and set vertically, those nearer and at the margins longer and directed outwards. The expanded portion of the leaf has been aptly compared to a flat, circular pincushion, stuck full of pins. Each of these tentacles is capped with a drop of sticky fluid, which glistens in the sun, and from which the plant derives its name of Sundew. A little later in the year than the butterwort the sundew develops a flower-stalk from the centre of its leaf-star, bearing a number

of small violet flowers arranged around the upper part. It is easy to overlook the sundew. It is not light green in colour amongst darker plants and heather, like the butterwort, but is often hid amidst mosses which possess the same reddish tinge as it does. And the common sundew is very small, rarely more than two inches in diameter from tip to tip of the leaves, though under favourable circumstances it may attain a larger size.

If a number of plants be examined, most of them will be found to have caught one or two insects in the sticky fluid at the ends of their tentacles. They have acquired the same power of supplementing their supply of nitrogen as the butterworts.

The thought which naturally arises is, 'How do these plants make use of their captured prey?' At one time it was suggested that the presence of the power of digestion outside the tissues of the body was only possessed by animals, and served to distinguish animal from vegetable forms. But both these plants secrete a digestive fluid, act on albumins outside of their tissues, and, what is more, reject the indigestible remains. Indeed they may be said to be in advance even of man in so far as they refuse to secrete an active juice when fed with bodies which are useless to them, while the introduction of such substances into the stomach of man is followed by a flow, more or less great, of active juice. When a small insect lights on a leaf of either of these plants, attracted by the light green of the butterwort, the red of the sundew, or by the glistening drops on their surfaces, certain changes are brought about. Caught by the sticky fluid, the insect struggles to free itself, but only succeeds in immersing itself more thoroughly, and, by its movements in irritating the glands of the leaf, causing a more copious flow of the secretion. In the butterwort it is soon drowned in the fluid poured out by those glands which actually touch it, while the edge of the leaf of the side on which it has lit becomes gradually curved in towards the middle, and, if the insect be not too near the centre of the leaf, reaches over it. By this manœuvre the plant is enabled to bring a second set of glands in contact with its prey, and thus to facilitate digestion. If the leaf be watched under a magnifying glass during the process, no movement of the glands themselves can be seen. The bent-in edge of the leaf gradually returns to its normal position after some hours.

The mechanism provided for the capture of prey in the *Drosera* is still more complicated and delicate. In it the tentacles, each of them surmounted by a gland, move in towards the insect.

If a plant of the sundew be dug up with its roots and placed in an earthenware saucer in the midst of damp moss, it will live for some time, though in town it soon becomes covered with particles of dust and soot adhering to its sticky secretion. The movements of the tentacles can then be easily observed through a glass. If a small fly or a minute particle of white of egg be carefully placed on one side of a leaf, the drops of fluid at the ends of the glands touched by it grow larger, and in a little the drops on the tentacles close by. In a few seconds the longer tentacles on which the fly rests begin to move slowly into the centre, arching their stems until

the terminal glands bearing the fly reach the ends of the shorter central tentacles. In a brief space of time after the tentacles in actual contact with the fly have begun to move, those adjoining arch inwards in a similar manner, bending down their tips towards the spot where the fly will ultimately rest. Gradually more and more of the tentacles bow down their heads to this spot, and, if the fly be larger than usual, every one may be so bent in. The leaf, like a pincushion before, now resembles a closed fist.

After a longer or shorter time, when the nutritious substances have been extracted from the prey, the tentacles slowly regain their former positions. If two flies be placed, one on one side, the second on the opposite side of a leaf, the tentacles of the corresponding sides bend in towards the imprisoned insects.

It is hard to believe, while watching the unerring accuracy with which each tentacle of the sundew directs its terminal gland to the object caught, that it is not a sentient being whose movements are directed by some central nervous system, but only a humble plant endowed during the struggle for existence with powers of movement and judgment far surpassing in delicacy those possessed by many of the higher animals.

The mechanism employed by the sundew is more complicated than that in the butterwort, in that parts not in contact with the prey secrete an active juice, while the curling in of the edges of the butterwort leaf is a comparatively clumsy proceeding compared with the incurving of the sundew's tentacles.

The drops of fluid which cover the tips of the tentacles serve not only to entangle the prey, but to digest it after capture. At present, however, before the capture of an insect it has no digestive power. Soon after the capture it becomes acid, contains a digestive ferment, and can digest albumins rapidly. The acid secreted is probably formic acid, an organic acid also found in the secretions of the ant.

So far we have only alluded to the actions of these plants when bodies containing substances useful for them have been entrapped. Almost more wonderful is their behaviour when bodies which do not contain the nitrogen they are in search of come in contact with their leaves. If small fragments of glass, or a drop of a solution of starch in water, be placed on the leaves, the glands at once recognise the futility of attempting to digest them, and fail to secrete more fluid. But though secretion fails, the actual movements of the leaves persist. The edge of the butterwort leaf curves in slightly; the tentacle of the sundew conveys the body towards the centre. Darwin observed marked incurvation of a tentacle of the sundew after a fragment of human hair weighing only one 78,740th of a grain had been placed on it. The most sensitive part of the human skin can only recognise a weight of one 66th of a grain.

Albumin is split up by these plants into the same bodies as are formed from it in the human stomach, and these are similarly absorbed into the tissues of the leaves. They suffer from the evil effects of a surfeit just as we do. If you were to place a large bit of white of egg on one of the sundew's leaves, it would make an heroic attempt to digest it all, but the leaf would

shortly wither and die. In the same way, if a small portion of peptone derived from the artificial digestion of albumin be given, it is so quickly absorbed that the part of the leaf on which it was placed dies within thirty-six hours.

Many who have tried to cultivate these plants indoors, and have thought to treat them kindly by supplying them with bits of meat and white of egg, have often had to deplore their early death from over-feeding. When kept in the house, or under glass, they should only be given a minute particle of raw meat or hard-boiled white of egg once a week, and care should be taken not to place this on the same leaf on each occasion. A leaf always takes some time to recover its active power after each digestive act.

An observation lately made on the powers of selection of these plants as regards substances derived from albumin and containing nitrogen, but of a much simpler composition than peptone, shows that they are unable to make use of this nitrogen in most instances—generally where the body is one derived from animals—although one of this class, which bears the name of asparagin, and which is a common constituent of plants, affords them the nitrogen they are in need of.

Both the butterwort and the sundew are widely distributed over northern Europe and the mountainous districts farther south. The Laplanders long ago found out that the butterwort contains a body which acts on milk like rennet, and used it to form 'tátniolk,' a substance resembling our junket, by pouring milk fresh from the cow over its leaves. In virtue of the acid contained in its secretion, its juice is antiseptic, another property which was discovered by the shepherds of the Alps, who anticipated the advent of antiseptic surgery when they used the leaves as a local application to sores on the udders of their cows.

Other members of these two families of plants grow in this country, but the two mentioned are by far the most common.

In Canada, Venus's Fly-trap is adapted for the capture of insects in perhaps a more wonderful way than even the sundew. The merest touch of an insect on one half of its divided leaf serves to cause almost instantaneous closure, with the consequent imprisonment of the unwary intruder between the two halves of the leaf.

Space forbids more than a mere mention of the numerous pitcher-plants and bladderworts, some of which digest the insects entrapped by their hollow chambers through the agency of active secretions, while others do no more than absorb the products of the decomposition of their victims, and possess no power of actual digestion.

That humble plants such as these should be able to perform acts as complex as those in mammals, with a much simpler apparatus, is a fact which must raise elements of wonder in our minds. That they carry out digestion of albumins in public, so to speak, and not in hidden cavities in the body as we do, renders them of unusual interest to all, because in them we can watch the progress of digestion similar to that in man, and can fathom some of the problems unascertainable so directly in any other way.

The butterwort and the sundew are so common and so easily obtainable that any one who cares to watch their actions personally may do so at

little trouble to himself. The plants, an earthenware saucer filled with moss and kept damp, a good magnifying glass, and a little care in feeding them, are all that he requires.

THE NOBLE FIVE.

A TALE OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA GOLD MINES.

III.

I HAD come down from the Little Joker Claim, leaving Blind Tom at our cabin, because the assessments for the year were finished, and I wanted to let off steam; but somehow while Miss Innes was at Warm Springs Camp I lost all interest in whisky. People only get drunk for lack of better amusement; besides, this sort of thing is bad form nowadays, and resented by decent women. The mere meeting with a well-bred girl reminded me of matters which do not belong to a mining camp, so instead of hanging about the saloons I used to sit under the trees on the Point, thinking of days long past, of school, Oxford, home—especially of home. I even wrote a letter, a thing I had not done before since I became Jack Robinson, *vice* somebody else deceased.

When the reply came, and was stuck up in the post-office window to be claimed, its address made me feel rather awkward. I claimed it to re-address for a friend, sending off the envelope goodness knows where, with a piece of blank paper inside. After that I swore off writing letters.

Well, to get back to my story. Four weeks I spent at Ainsworth doing nothing much, to the wonder of all the boys in camp. I must say I behaved beautifully, spent nearly all I possessed in a suit of slops at the store, invested my last four dollars in the cheapest of bacon and flour, got down my spare tent from the mountain, pitched it in the Point, and lived so decorously that the folks who dwelt in the upper shanty cut me dead.

Miss Innes would come down to sketch on the Point, mainly I think because the Colonel was too attentive, and she naturally wanted to get away from him. A nuisance over fifty years of age is beyond endurance; but yet she seemed to take the liveliest interest in his movements, and was sure to know every day what claims he had gone to visit in the camp.

She used to draw me out, to make me talk about myself, about the crowd, or any topic except her own sweet reticent self. If she cared to tell me why she was in Kootenay, or what she wanted with the mysterious Mr Swainson, she would do so without the help of leading questions, but at the end of a week I had found out as much of her private affairs as she wished me to know—which was exactly nothing. For all practical purposes it was enough to me that she sat caricaturing the mountains day after day, with the sun touching gold in her brown hair and the lake casting a deeper blue into her sweet blue eyes. Once when I asked if she had heard of Mr Swainson yet, she said she could not think who I was talking of—'Mr Swainson?'

'Yes, the man you came here to find.'

'Oh!' said Miss Innes, 'surely it's dinner-time?'

Sometimes she let me take her up through the

camp on horseback, when she would express the liveliest interest in any claims which the Colonel had told her about, though she yawned lamentably over the rest. She asked imbecile young lady questions, only to startle me at intervals with some accidental word such as only a prospector would know.

'So this is the "foot wall" and this is the "hanging wall"? How interesting! And is that what you call "country rock" between them?'

'No, Miss Innes; that's four feet of good sulphurets.'

'Oh, I see. Then, why do they still mess about on the "cap"?''

'Because they don't know what's good for them.'

'They should prospect from under that bluff,' said Miss Innes indignantly. 'Why, with fifty feet of tunnelling, they'd have a saleable proposition!'

I'm afraid that I stared hard. How did this young woman, fresh from England, learn the slang of prospecting? But this was more than slang, it was real practical knowledge of mining, a suggestion that I had made to the owners myself some months ago.

However, this mystery was hers and no business of mine. Moreover, she was blushing hotly at having so far forgotten her rôle of novice. I began to talk of the weather while I helped her into the saddle. Then we rode on.

'Mr Robinson,' she said, no longer trying to hide her embarrassment, 'I forgot myself. It's no use trying to pretend any more. I've been a good deal among these silver camps; but you won't betray me, will you?'

'I am your servant, Miss Innes, in everything; but you must take great care or you will betray yourself to the whole camp.'

After she had once admitted her knowledge of mining, we talked together like two prospectors of true fissure veins, of contacts, leads, and rock, of tunnel, shaft, and winze; for on all these things her information was almost uncanny.

I have known a great many women, and loved them too; but Miss Innes—of course I do not give her real name—was the only girl I ever met who could be a chum and a jolly good fellow. She was not the less womanly, never let a chap forget to respect her; but once away from Ainsworth, there was not the slightest trace about this girl of the feminine nonsense which men are supposed to like.

She had made me promise that day to take her to the Little Joker claim in which Blind Tom and I were partners. Wonderful stories Tom could tell if he chose, he being the pioneer of Warm Springs camp; indeed, I had bet her a pair of gloves to nothing that she would fail even to open his mouth. The tale of the Noble Five was a mystery. Tom alone could tell it; but though all of us wanted to know what really happened, it was an understood thing that the man who questioned my partner would get little satisfaction for his pains.

'You let me try,' said Miss Innes.

So at noon we unsaddled at the Little Joker, and while Tom washed and changed in the cabin, I showed Miss Innes all there was to be seen in cut and tunnel. Then I cooked the dinner while she sat resting in the doorway, and Tom, too,

shy as yet even to speak, pretended no end of business on the claim.

I had never noticed before how dirty everything was, the log walls hung with cooking-pots and clothes, the bunk littered with grimy blankets, the sheet-iron stove all rust and grease in its box of gravel. She seemed to like the place, especially the tables and the three-legged stools, rough-hewn with an axe, the gold-pans which we used for baking bread, the litter of rock, pipes, candles, books, heaped up in the window-ledge.

'It looks so real,' she said, 'everything for good hard use, nothing for show. And yet, I'm sure this log-cabin is prettier than half our pernickety houses. Look at the sun outside there on those pines, and the big deep shadows in the tunnel. There's Blind Tom messing about picking up bits of native silver for me. What a huge man he is! Do you think he'll tell me the story after dinner?'

'I doubt it.'

I poured off the water in which I had been parboiling the bacon, set the pan on the stove, then looked about. It had seemed commonplace enough, this log-lut in the woods, the prospect-hole in the mountain-side hard by; but now that I looked with her eyes, from her point of view, the place was translated into a mislaid corner of paradise.

'It's you,' I said; 'you've changed prospecting into poetry, and silver-mining into romance. You're changing Blind Tom and me into knights-errant. Beware, Miss Innes, or you'll find yourself set on a throne as Queen of Beauty.'

This by the way is not quite what I said, but what I thought of afterwards when it was too late.

Then Tom came in very awkward, and we sat down to dinner. Somehow with feminine witchery she thawed him out, made him at ease in five minutes, got him to talk of the claim, of other prospect-holes, of the camp in general, and at last of the new discoveries of the past few months, the great camps on Trail Creek, Slocan, and Kaslo, which in those days could scarcely boast a tent where there are cities now.

It seems very curious looking back over five years at Blind Tom feeling with a fork in his short-sighted way for scraps of bacon which he mistook for beans, at Miss Innes chattering away perfectly contented with our tin plates and rough camp-fare, then at myself just in the act of realising that I was once more hopelessly in love.

But in those days Kootenay was a new country which had only begun to dream of its great destiny as one of the richest mining-fields in the world; and we, two prospectors who could not get credit for a sack of flour, were entertaining an angel unawares. We are rich now in lauds, in big mines, in shares fetching thirty per cent. dividends, but we were happier then.

IV.

Tom was filling his pipe when I came back after dinner, for I had been away to water the horses. One glance at Miss Innes showed me that she had taken all possible advantage of my absence. Tom in his own good time would tell the story of the Noble Five.

'Come,' said I, 'let's sit down under the stoop, here where it's shady.'

So I placed a large box against the front wall for our guest, took a stump for myself, and watched Tom settle himself on the doorstep.

'I dunno,' he said, 'that I'd ought to tell you horrors.' That from Tom was the refusal provocative; but perhaps we both wanted to hear Miss Innes plead with all a woman's burning curiosity.

'Well,' Tom began to get under way with slow deliberation, 'there was five of us prospecting along this country: Arkansaw George, Bill Quiddicks, as had a gammy leg, Mick, who was Fenian Irish, Bloody Ike—if you'll excuse his name, being a lady—and me, Blind Tom, what was said to be no good except for cooking.'

'That was three years ago come April, which was early, considering as we'd have no truck with any ground down here on the low slope; and we was prospecting around the flanks of the snow, feeling mighty despondent. Bloody Ike made out we'd ought to prospect along by the lake, Mick he was for some crazy course up in the snow because we'd get easier travelling, while Bill Quiddicks and me was content to do just what Arkansaw thought good and right, he being the best man of the crowd. The result was argument, in which two or three of us got black eyes, and after that we begun to feel better. Mick went prospecting the snow-fields on his own account, but what he found that time was a badly broken leg all to himself.

'The rest of us ranged around promiscuous-like, and everywhere we saw float; but it seemed that nothing would suit us. We'd found one of the biggest silver camps on earth, and cursed our luck because it wasn't gold. All these claims, the Skyline, the Krao, Number One, the four Gallaghers, the Spokane, Trinket, and most of the Sunlight Belt, including the Neosho, were our discoveries, but we turned up our royal noses and didn't take the trouble to stake them out because the price of silver was beginning to fall. We wanted gold. And all that time, while we was humbugging around the mountain, with nothing to eat but an occasional deer, there lay that Irishman in camp dying by inches of gangrene 'cause his leg was smashed. He called us all the names he could lay his tongue to, did Mick, and as to us—why, we nursed him all we knew. Arkansaw Bill was away south to get him medicine, which he couldn't buy this side of the United States boundary, and when he was coming back he got himself drowned trying to swim the Kootenay. So there was Ike, and Bill Quiddicks, and me nursing the Irishman, too heart-sick to prospect except for meat, and the Irishman calling us all sorts of fools for our pains.

'At last, when he'd got so low he could scarcely speak, he calls us around him. "Begorra," says he, "you ain't no prospectors. Here you've been four weeks afoolin' round among blind leads where you didn't find nothin', every mother's son of ye, when the pure red gould is right up you hill where I'd told you. Look a here," says he, and he picks out a bit of rock which was hid away under his blanket; "here's what I found, rooting round in the ashes of the fire. Phwat div ye call that, eh?"

'We licked at it, each of us, with our tongues,

we peered at it through the glass, we took the feel with our knives, then passed it on to the next man, hoping as how he'd take the responsibility of speaking.

"Div ye call yourselves prospectors?" says Mick.

"Never any more, so help me Bob," says Ike.

"Never no more," says Bill Quiddicks, as had the gammy leg.

"Never no more," says I.

"Then I puts the name to it," says Mick. "I puts the name to it—and calls it chloride, which the same was smelted accidental in yon camp-fire, and came out native gold."

"Why didn't you let on before?" says Ike.

"'Cause," says Mick, "you've been despisin' me all along for seeking the high ground in the snow. This 'ere float came a rolling down last week—down off the hillside wid a rubble of stuff as thawed off from under some clift," says he: "this claim up the hill is what I've found, and what I names the Noble Five prospeck, after four fools and one man as is dying afore sundown."

"And now," says he, very low, "will yez do as I tells ye now I'm leader av this outfit?"

"We will," says Ike, but Bill Quiddicks and me we both swore to it. "Then," says the Irishman, "ye'll make a coffin, and ye'll make a birch canoe; ye'll take my body to the head of the lake, then up to Bonner's Ferry, then overland to Kootenay Station, and then by the Northern Pacific Railway to Spokane Falls, then ye'll take my body to my mother as lives in Fourth Avenue. If yez fail in that, my curse be on you."

'For an hour he lay still, with us waiting beside him for the end; but when the sun was red and we thinking, I guess about supper, he opens his eyes, and says we'd got to pray for him. I couldn't pray; Bill Quiddicks he could only pray Methodist; but Bloody Ike, he was a Roman Catholic, so he prayed in Latin. When that was finished the Irishman was dead, so Bloody Ike went about in the dusk making torches. He planted them torches, one at Mick's feet, one at his head; he lit them from the camp-fire, which was burned down to white ash, then he told us to go away and not chaff while he said some more prayers.'

Blind Tom rammied his finger into his pipe and put it out, then he looked away among the trees while the sun gleamed sideways on his goggles. Miss Innes wiped her eyes with a handkerchief. I sat wondering why Tom should tell that yarn which never before would he speak of to me or any man living. Then Tom went on without warning:

'We tossed up which two of us should go with the body to the Irishman's mother, and the choice fell upon me to stay behind prospecting for this gold mine which was to be called the Noble Five. We made the coffin, sealed up tight with pitch; we made the birch canoe down there at the Point where Ainsworth is standing now. Then we put the coffin into the canoe; and again we tossed up. Heads had it that Ike should go in the bow, Bill Quiddicks in the stern. So they shoved off, and I stood on the Point watching and watching so long as I could hear the dip of the paddles.

'You know them flurries of wind as comes down from between the mountains? Well, perhaps that accounts for what happened. Neither Bloody Ike nor Bill Quiddicks as had the gammy leg, nor the canoe nor the coffin was ever heard tell of

again. Moreover, the Irishman he was dead of gangrene, and Arkansaw Bill he was drowned trying to bring medicine from the States. It's often seemed to me that the Noble Five claim ain't lucky.'

Miss Innes looked round at him through the tail of her eye.

'So you did find the ledge?' she asked.

'I found the ledge,' said Tom, 'and it ain't no good.'

'Where is it?'

'Up the hill,' said Tom vaguely.

'Up above the "Skyline,"' said I, 'right up in the granite on the skirts of the snow.'

'I dunno why,' said Tom, 'that I told you that yarn; perhaps it was your coming to this camp with the Colonel. Is he a friend of yours, ma'am?'

'No.' She shivered.

'I don't know why he should want to buy that claim. You see I'd been to him in the hope of selling one of my wild-cats, but I ain't inclined to sell the Noble Five. However, I showed him around, and he took an option—on this here property, the Little Joker, because Jack here and me is broke. But his goings on about the Noble Five makes me uneasy somehow. He ain't going to get that—'cause of the men what died, which it's their monument. I'd like right well to take him away somewhere and lose him.'

Miss Innes seemed bristling with unaccountable excitement. 'Well,' she cried nervously.

'The Colonel,' said Tom, 'he's got some sort of puffed-up legitimate mining proposition as he calls it, which he wanted to fix up with me. I tells him to go to the devil—excuse my language, ma'am; he's tried to buy me, he's tried to bribe my partner, Jack here, but if he goes any further, he'll land himself in jail.'

Miss Innes rose, flushed, breathless, staring at Tom with unaccountable excitement.

'Don't trust him,' she cried; 'watch him; he's dangerous. I know what I'm saying. He's gone to that claim to-day!'

KNOTS AND THREADS.

WE still talk of the Gordian knot and the thread of Destiny, although few of us stop to consider the meaning of words we utter so glibly. The Gordian knot was a lucky knot, fastened to the wagon of a man who from a peasant became a king, of which it was predicted that whosoever untied it should become monarch of all Asia; whilst the thread of Destiny refers to a belief of the ancients that the Moiræ or Fates spun a thread at the birth of every child, and upon this thread the good or evil fate, long or short life, of each individual depended. There is another knot much depicted and talked of in the last century, but which seems to have dropped out of use in our prosaic age. This, the true lover's knot, was supposed to represent the thread of destiny of two lives inextricably entangled. It might be supposed that these knots and threads were only poetic symbols; but if we examine the matter a little more closely we shall find that

all the world over, both in ancient and in modern times, knots and threads have been not only symbols, but realities, to which many magical properties and much religious superstition are attached.

In Denny's *Folklore of China* we are told that the dead are swathed in long strips of cloth, two of which must be white and one red. The ends of these strips are tied in 'an auspicious knot,' and as many of these knots are tied at various places on the body as the material used will allow. Here we get perhaps the key to the many complicated twists and knots engraved on early stone monuments, most of which are funereal, and possibly also to that widely spread custom of binding the dead with knotted cords or enclosing them in nets, so that the net came to be symbolical of death.

That the use of nets in burial is very ancient cannot be doubted, for it seems to have become a survival in Egypt at a remote period, so that many mummies are enveloped in a network of beads. Mummies in remote Alaska are found encased in network; whilst in Kentucky bodies wrapped in knotted twine mantles have been found, and many others in various parts of America bound up with knotted cords. In all these cases there is doubtless much significance attached to the knots, which, as far as can be understood, are supposed to be possessed of magical power to preserve the deceased from enemies, and especially from the machinations of witchcraft.

How very ancient is this belief in the efficacy of knots may be judged from the fact that among the Chaldeans they were used in the cure of disease.

In Berdoe's *Popular History of Medicine* many records of magical remedies are given, and among them some by knots. Thus: 'When the Babylonian god Marduk wishes to soothe the last moments of a dying man, Hea says: "Take a woman's linen kerchief, bind it round thy right hand, loose it from the left hand, knot it with seven knots; do so twice."'

Naturally, magic knots could be employed for evil as well as for good; to cause sickness and death, as well as to cure disease. Hence we find that witches were supposed to have the power, by tying knots and blowing upon them, to cause illnesses of many kinds, a superstition from which Mohammed was not free, for in the Koran he writes: 'Say I fly for refuge unto the Lord of the daybreak, that he may deliver me from the mischief of those things that he hath created: and from the mischief of the night when it cometh on: and from the mischief of women blowing on knots.'

Witches, even up to the last century, were condemned to death if found with knotted cords upon their persons; and in Scotland it was supposed that, by stealing hair from the tails of cows and making a rope of the hair, tying a knot in it for each cow, they could get the milk of these cows for their own use.

The Lapps and Finns used to tie knots and sell them to mariners, that by untying these knots they might ensure favourable winds. Two they might loosen, but if they dared to untie the third a tempest would be sure to follow.

It is very interesting to note the use of

knots for exactly similar purposes among the American Indians as of old in Europe. Thus we learn that among the Mexicans of the Rio Grande a lock of hair tied into knots is supposed to secure a maiden's affections; and Mr Bourke says: 'Miss Edna Dean Proctor, the poet, told me that some years ago in Illinois she met a woman who, having been ill a long time, and despairing of recovery, had consulted a man pretending to occult powers, who prescribed that she should wear next the skin a certain knotted red cord which he gave her.'

Magic knots lead necessarily to magic or sacred threads or cords, since it is obvious that a knot would acquire superior virtue from being tied in that which was already consecrated. It is a very curious fact that sacred knotted cords are worn by men of all religions in almost every part of the globe; they are generally prepared with great care of special material, and are credited with many mystic properties, but especially with that of warding off sickness or disaster.

The sacred thread of the Brahmins is well known; it is a caste distinction assumed at an early age, and never parted with. It must be made by a Brahmin, and should consist of three strands, each of a different colour, forty-eight yards in length, doubled and twisted together twice, the ends tied in knots. It must be worn next the skin over the left shoulder, hanging down to the thigh on the right side. The three castes of the Hindus are distinguished by the material of these threads—cotton for the Brahmins, hemp for the warriors, and wool for the artisans. The Parsees also wear the sacred thread, and boys of seven or nine are invested with it, the threads used being always made of fibres of the suru tree. Monier Williams describes the sacred girdle of the Parsees as made of seventy-two woollen threads, forming a flat band, which is twined three times round the body, and tied in two peculiar knots, the secret of which is only known to the Parsees.

The use of 'medicine cords' is common among North American Indians. Mr Bourke describes those worn by the Apaches. These consist of one, two, three, or four strands, to which are attached shells, feathers, beads, rock-crystal, sacred green stones, and other articles, doubtless employed symbolically.

These cords can only be made by the chief medicine men, and are consecrated with much ceremony. Mr Bourke thinks they may be connected with those mnemonic cords used by the Peruvians and Chinese; and he gives an instance of their use in this manner when a leader named Popé succeeded in throwing off the Spanish yoke. He persuaded the people that he had been directed by the spirits to make a rope of palm-leaf and tie in it a number of knots to represent the days before the rebellion was to take place; but it is evident that the magic of the knotted cord was more potent than its mnemonic properties. The four strands of the cord of the Apaches were of different colours—yellow, blue, white, and black; and the Peruvians are said to have used cords of four colours in their religious ceremonies, whilst the Aztecs cast lots with little cords knotted together.

Mr Bourke proceeds to compare the medicine cords of the American Indians with the religious cords and girdles still in use among Christians, and quotes Picard to the effect that the Roman Catholic Church condemned those who thought to give pleasure to the dead by burying with them little cords knotted with many knots. Yet the various monastic orders still tie knots in their girdles, the number of these knots being regulated according to the order; and in Abyssinia, according to Mr Bent, every Christian wears around his neck a blue cord as an emblem of his faith.

The colour of the threads superstitiously used as *medicine* is prescribed. Blue, as we have seen, is the Christian colour in Abyssinia, but that colour is considered unlucky in Scotland; and in 1635 a man in the Orkney Islands was said to have been utterly ruined by 'nine knots cast on a blue thread and given to his sister.' Red thread is prescribed as a remedy for fever and for nosebleeding, and red worsted is tied round cows' tails to preserve them from the evil eye. A 'wrested thread,' spun from black wool and cast in nine knots, is described in *Notes and Queries* as used to cure sprains. The origin of these sacred threads and knots is doubtless symbolical, denoting the subjection of the wearer to certain deities. It may not be irrelevant to quote here the passage of the Psalms in which the kings of the earth and the rulers are represented as taking counsel against the Lord and His anointed, saying: 'Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us.' The manner of wearing these cords from shoulder to hip is also symbolical of the subjection of the whole body, whilst the knots perhaps signify the unalterable nature of the bond entered into between the deity and the neophyte. Meanwhile the universality of the curious superstitions connected with knots and cords seems to throw back their origin to the childhood of the world and the cradle of the human race.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER XX.—'LOVE THE DEBT.'

OLIVIA was not a little tired; this was the true explanation of the tears which had driven her upstairs. It was also the one excuse she saw for herself when she thought the matter over in her own room. Jack had devoted the whole morning to her; it was the squatter's turn; and, of course, Jack must invite whom he liked to stay as long as he pleased. To think of limiting his freedom in any such matter at the very outset of their engagement! Yet she had been guilty of that thought; but she was tired; she would lie down for an hour.

She lay down for two or three. Excitement had worn her out. It was after five when she awoke and went downstairs. As she did so Claude and Cripps crossed the hall and put on their hats. She hailed Claude.

'What have you done with Jack?' she asked.

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'I think you'll find him in the little study at the end of the library.'

'Thanks.'

Olivia glanced at Cripps. She had never met him. She wondered who he was, and why Claude did not introduce him to her, and what made both of them so glum. They hurried out of the house as though they were afraid of her. What could it mean? She would find out from Jack; she felt a renewed right to him now, and thought of hints, as she went, for Mr Dalrymple, if they were still together. But Jack was alone; he was sitting in the dejected attitude engendered by a peculiarly long and low arm-chair.

'Well?' said Olivia briskly.

'Well?' responded Jack; but he looked at her without rising and without a smile; and both omissions were unlike the man.

'I half expected to find Mr Dalrymple with you. I'm so glad he isn't! I—it's my turn, I think!'

'I haven't seen Dalrymple for over an hour,' said Jack, with his heavy, absent eyes upon her all the time. 'I wonder where he is?'

Olivia would not ask him what the matter was; she preferred to find out for herself, and then tell him. She looked about her. On a salver were a decanter and three wine glasses; one was unused; and on the floor there lay an end of pink tape. She picked and held it up between finger and thumb.

'Lawyers!' she cried.

'Yes, I've had a solicitor here.'

'Not to make your will?'

'No. On a—on a local matter. Don't look at me like that! It's nothing much: nothing new, at all events.'

'But you are worried!'

She knelt beside his chair, and rested her elbows on the arm, studying his pale set profile. His eyes met hers no longer.

'I am,' he admitted; 'but that's my own fault. It's not worth it. And it's nothing new.'

'Who was the lawyer?'

'You wouldn't know him.'

'I mean to know who he was. Mr Cripps?'

Jack did not answer. He rolled his head from side to side against the back of the chair. His eyes remained fast upon the opposite wall.

'It is—the old trouble,' Olivia whispered. 'The trouble of two nights ago!'

His silence told her much. The drops upon his forehead added more. But her voice was calm and undismayed; it enabled him at last to use his own.

'Yes!' he said hoarsely. 'Claude made a mistake. It was true after all!'

'Hunt's story, darling?'

'Hunt's story. There *was* an English marriage as well as an Australian one. He had a wife at each side of the world! Claude made a mistake. He went to the wrong church at Chelsea—to a church by the river. He had always thought it was the parish church. It is not. St Luke's is the parish church, and there in the book they have the marriage down in black and white. Cripps found it; but he first found it somewhere else, where he says they have the records of every

marriage in the country since 1850. He would have looked there the day Claude was up, but he left it too late. He looked yesterday, and found it, sure enough, on the date Hunt gave. October 22d, 1853. And he went to Chelsea and saw it there. So there's no mistake about it this time; and you see how we stand.'

'I see. My poor boy!'

'It's Claude after all. Poor chap, he's awfully cut up. He blames himself so for the mistake between the two churches; but Cripps tells me it was the most natural mistake in the world. Chelsea Old Church—that was where Claude went. And he says he'll never forgive himself.'

'But I forgive him,' said Olivia, with the first sign of emotion in her voice. She was holding one of his hands; her other was in his hair; but still he stared straight in front of him.

'Of course you forgive him,' he said gently. 'When you come to think of it, there's nothing to forgive. Claude didn't make the facts. He only failed to discover them.'

'I am glad he *did* fail,' whispered Olivia.

'Glad? You can't be glad! Why do you say that?'

And now he turned his face to her, in his astonishment; and suddenly it was she who could not meet his gaze.

'How can you be glad?' he continued to demand.

'Because—otherwise—you would never—have—spoken'—

'Spoken? Of course I shouldn't! It's a thousand pities I did. It makes it all the harder—now!'

'What do you mean?'

'Surely you see?'

They had risen with a common instinct. The ice was broken; there were no more shamefaced glances. The girl stood proudly at her full height.

'I see nothing. You say our engagement makes this all the harder for you; it *should* be just the opposite.'

'Will nothing make you see?' cried Jack. 'Oh, how am I to say it? It—it can't go on—our engagement!'

'And why not?'

'I am nothing—nobody—a nameless'—

'What does it matter?' interrupted Olivia passionately. 'Do you really think it was the name I wanted after all? You pay me a high compliment! I know exactly what you mean—know exactly what this means to you. To me it makes no difference at all. You are the man you have always been; you are the man—I—love.'

His eyes glistened.

'God bless you for saying so! You are the one to love a man the better when he's down on his luck. I know that. Yet we must never'—

'Never what?'

'Marry!'

'Not—marry?' She stared at him in sheer incredulity. 'Not when we promised—only yesterday? You may break your word if you like; mine I would never break!'

'Then I must. It is not to be thought of any more. Surely you see? It is not that I have lost the money and the title; oh! you must see what it is!'

'Of course I see. But I don't allow the objection.'

'Your people would never hear of it now; and quite right too!'

'My people! I am of age. I have a little money of my own, enough for us both. I can do exactly what I like. Besides, I'm not so sure about my people; you don't know my father as I know him.'

'He is a man of the world. He would not hear of it.'

'Then I must act for myself.'

'You must not!'

'I must. Do you think I am only a fair-weather girl? I gave you my promise when all was different; I would rather die—than break it now.'

'But I release you! I set you free! Everything has altered. Oh, can't you put yourself in my place? I should deserve to be shot if I married you now. I release you because I must.'

'And I refuse to be released.'

They regarded one another with hopeless faces. Their eyes were dim with love—yet here they stood apart. This was the dead-lock. Nothing could come of this contest of honour against honour, of one unselfish love against another. It was like striking flint upon flint, and steel upon steel. A gong sounded in the distance; it was the signal to dress for dinner. Olivia beat the floor impatiently with one foot; her lips trembled; her eyes filled with tears.

'If you cared for me,' she cried passionately, 'half as much as you said you did, you wouldn't be so ready to lose me now!'

'If I cared less,' he answered, 'I would take you at your word—God knows how you tempt me to!—and you should be my wife. I would mind less how I dragged you down—what became of us in the end. But I love you too well to spoil your life. Don't you know that, Olivia?'

'Ah yes! I know it! I know—I know!'

She tottered, and he took her in his arms. He was shaking all over. Her head lay back upon his shoulder. He smoothed the hair from the high white forehead; he looked tenderly and long into the wild wet eyes. His arm tightened about her; he could not help it.

'Sweetheart,' he whispered, 'you must help me to be strong. It is hard enough as it is. Only help me, or it will be far harder. Help me now—at dinner! I am going to take the head of the table for the last time. Help me by being bright! We can talk afterwards. There is time enough. Only help me now!'

'I will do my best,' she whispered, disengaging herself from his trembling arms. 'I will try to be as brave as you. Oh, there is no one in the world like you! Yes, do let us talk about it afterwards. There is so much to say and to decide. But I give you fair warning: I shall never—never—never—let you go. Darling, you will need me now! And I cannot give you up—much less after this—shall I tell you why? You have gone the wrong way to work; you have made me love you more than ever—my hero—my darling—my all!'

She stood a moment at the open door, kissing her hand to him—a rosy flush upon her face—the great tears standing in her eyes. Then she was gone. He watched her down the length of the

library; the stained windows dappled her, as she passed, with rubies and sapphires, huge and watery; at the farther door she turned, and kissed her hand again—and fled.

FOREIGNERS IN ARGENTINA.

IN discussing the general position of Europeans in the River Plate Republics, we shall leave out of consideration the 'gallego' or pure Spaniard as having had little to do with the progress of those countries, and being a race by no means idolised by the natives. Only a little higher than the 'gallego' ranks the 'gringo,' the name applied to all other foreigners as conveying a subtle sense of contempt and inferiority. Those who are acquainted with the general type of Spaniard who goes forth to seek his fortune in the old colonies of his country will readily understand the low estimation in which his countrymen are held by the present inhabitants; but why Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Italians should be viewed with scarcely less dislike seems somewhat strange. But on looking into the question as affecting Argentina we find that this hostile feeling is due to two causes: firstly, tradition, and secondly, to a constantly increasing jealousy of those who are developing the country in a manner of which the native population is incapable. As regards tradition we will deal briefly. In the first place few but students of history are aware that during the Napoleonic wars a considerable British force was despatched under General Whitelock to capture Buenos Ayres. It signally failed, and the British colours taken on that occasion are still national trophies displayed in the cathedral of the city.

Again, the tyrant Rosas, some thirty years ago, from being a rough herdsman in the plains, rose to the position of Dictator over the vast territories extending from Bolivia to the Indian frontiers in the Pampas. Of an uncultivated mind, he taught his followers to ridicule the peaceful European settlers, and backed up his doctrine by subjecting them to every manner of indignity. Irony of fate! A few years later, after an atrocious career, he fled his country to save his life, and sought a refuge in Southampton. 'Quantum mutatus ab illo.' From being the incarnation of power in a country nearly as large as Western Europe, he lived and died perfectly unknown in the midst of a nation which, above all others, he had held up to the derision of his 'gaucha' hordes.

His teaching, however, took root, and so to-day, wherever the name of Rosas is remembered, it is still a creed that foreigners are lacking in all virile qualities.

The cause of the jealousy with which the Argentines regard foreign settlers scarcely needs explanation. Let us consider that in the first instance the English people hold almost the entire national and provincial bonds, obligations representing revenues and land to an enormous amount. More than this, with scarcely an exception, we control from London all the railways throughout the country—the arteries without which the commercial life of the republic would cease to exist. Further, all the first-class business houses and industrial concerns are either owned, or where not owned, are largely managed by

Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Germans. Everywhere the story is the same—the Argentine seems incapable of ‘fending,’ so to speak, for himself; he is little more than a puppet in the hands of abler men.

The immigration returns for the last few years afford interesting figures, especially when taken with their practical commentary in the shape of the population of such provinces as Santa Fé. The Italian population alone already outnumbers all the other nationalities in the country, the natives themselves included. Some are permanent settlers, some but a floating part of the population, but they are always increasing in number, and are in their own way doing as much for Argentina as British and French capital. As cheap labourers and farmers on a small scale they are turning the wilderness into corn-lands; each one produces by his manual labour far more than he consumes, and although many after having made a little money take it with them out of the country, their work has been done, and their places are taken by others of their race with equal capacities for developing the land, each in his own small way. And here there are practically no labour disputes, no strikes; the flood of immigration is too strong, the individual immigrant contented with so very little.

And where the Italian labourer has not yet found his way, what is the state of affairs? Travelling to those still little known regions which lie along the frontiers of Bolivia and of the Indian countries of the Chaco, we look into a page of history which to the civilised world was written a hundred years ago. Here hatred of the European is strongest, and that amongst a class but little removed from serfdom. A thriftless improvident race of half-breed labourers, they are always in debt to their employers, and therefore always at their mercy—ready to sell their individual liberty for the wherewithal to gamble, or for the value of a few bottles of rum. Compared with them the Indian himself is a lofty type; as a labourer, or as a man, *per se*, infinitely better. And here amid this people, devoid of self-respect and of any aim beyond desire for present enjoyment, we find the most unconcealed scorn of the foreigner. Surely there have been few examples more striking than this of the lack of sympathy between the Latin and Germanic races. When Macaulay in his essay on Machiavelli discussed the different ideals of honour which lie at the bottom of the societies of northern and southern Europe, he spoke plain words of truth. To the legislators of the remoter provinces self-respect is synonymous with self-gain—their views of right are different from European views; they have until the last few years been barred in by deserts and savages from taking part in the progress of nineteenth-century ideas. Their standards are not so much the effect of inherent baseness as of ignorance—heritages of the past—but they nevertheless exist. Here there is no patriotism; the national government and the foreigner alike simply afford unlimited opportunities for chicanery, in the absence of healthy public opinion. Immigrants have as yet no direct influence in the government of the country, but their day will come. The Argentine is going more and more to the wall. In the great cities on the

Plate and amongst the upper classes European ideas have taken good hold, and compared with the provincial governments, that of the National Confederation is most estimable. Railways are now opening up the country in every direction, and more particularly the temperate regions in Patagonia, such as Chubut, which are in every way adapted for colonists from northern Europe. The Argentine Republic is an actual illustration of a theory recently advanced in a work on the ‘evolution of societies.’ Here is rapidly taking place a natural selection, as applied to nations, after Darwin’s heart. But on one point we take leave to differ from Mr Benjamin Kidd. South America in the future will *not* be ruled by satraps from Europe, but by the scions of the Old-World stocks acclimatised in the territories south of Buenos Ayres.

THE SPECIAL ENVOY.

By CHARLES D. LESLIE.

WHEN Pepworth Tring, the well-known South African millionaire, sent for me, and after inquiring if I was at liberty for a few weeks, said that he was about to commission me to take a small map to his Johannesburg representative, I was rather surprised that he should go to the expense of a special messenger when the postal service was available.

‘It seems a very simple undertaking,’ I said.

But he speedily enlightened me.

‘Ah, that’s where you are wrong,’ he replied, giving me a shrewd glance. ‘In this case the post is not to be trusted, and an unscrupulous enemy will strain every nerve to defeat my intention.’

My present employer, a well-known Kimberley man, who had lately turned his attention to the Witwatersrandt Gold Mines, was middle-aged, about fifty, but looked more, owing to the hard and adventurous life he had led. His tanned, weather-beaten face appeared commonplace enough, but behind the small steady gray eyes lay a quick brain and unerring judgment. Few, indeed, could boast with any degree of truth on ever having got the better of Pepworth Tring. As a judge of diamonds also he had barely an equal. All this I know from common hearsay.

‘You anticipate there will be an attempt to rob me during the journey?’

‘I am quite sure of it. The matter on the face of it is simple enough. This map’—(he held up a small piece of parchment a few square inches in size—it appeared to represent the course of a river, some red crosses were marked on one portion, and some lines of writing ran along the bottom)—‘has to be given to Mr Howard of Fox Street, Johannesburg. There your mission ends. But whether you will be able to accomplish it is another matter. Gibson, my old partner, is determined to obtain possession of this map by some means; he is rich, unscrupulous, and can command the services of men even more unscrupulous than himself. This is the reason I do not trust the post. The corruption prevalent among all Boer officials extends to the post-office; my letters have been opened. He has creatures there in his employ. You must trust no one, and conceal the paper in such a manner that it cannot be found.’

'But while on board ship it would surely be better to entrust it to the captain or purser?'

'That would be risky, and only postpone their attack on you. If you received the map back safely you would without doubt be robbed of it between Capetown and Johannesburg. No; when the boat reaches Capetown, they must be under the impression that you are not the bearer.'

'When am I to leave London?'

'The *Roman* leaves the docks to-morrow and Plymouth on Saturday. Your berth is booked; Gibson is also a passenger, and several of his following. But perhaps I had better explain why this map is so important.

'Gibson, like myself, is an old Kimberley man. We both did very well there, and lately like me he has been dealing in Transvaal mining property. We have often gone partners in various undertakings. In the autumn of '94, being then in Johannesburg—about six months ago—and feeling the want of a holiday, I determined to go on a shooting expedition through the Transvaal towards the sea. Accompanied by two Zulus, I carried out my intention, and after some weeks travelling we found ourselves in the low-country bordering on Swaziland. Here quite by chance I made a remarkable discovery. In the dried-up channel of what had been a river I came upon traces of diamonds. The find to my eyes was most promising; but before I could pursue my investigations further, one of my Zulus despatched to get food from a neighbouring kraal, came hot-foot with the news that the Swazis were up in arms. Irritated by some act of Boer oppression, they seemed inclined to wreak their vengeance on me, and so we fled forthwith for our very lives. Before leaving, I drew up a plan of the place, so that it could be found again.

'After various adventures I reached Durban, and took ship for England. Meeting Gibson in London, I acquainted him in general terms with my discovery, stating that in the course of my journeying I had found diamonds. I had intended to take him into partnership in this affair, but the knowledge which I gained immediately afterwards that he had swindled me in the matter of some gold mines changed my purpose, and I broke with him for good.

'Now the value of my find is problematical. Diamonds have not yet been found in paying quantity in the Transvaal. This place may be a second Kimberley, and shake the De Beers monopoly. It is quite possible. Therefore I want the ground pegged out in the usual way, and to register myself as the owner; but if Gibson could get hold of the map he would forestall me. It is not convenient for me to go myself just now, as I have some important business in hand; so not to delay obtaining the claims, I have ordered Howard to peg them out and register in my name, but he can do nothing until he has the particulars contained in this. Now, do you understand?'

'Yes; but how far is Gibson cognisant of your plans?'

'He has found out that I intend sending the map immediately to Johannesburg. This office is watched; you will be shadowed on leaving, and when they find that you are a passenger by the

Roman they will conclude that you are my messenger. It will be your business to nullify that belief.'

'I see.'

'You had better pretend to be a new sub-manager sent out by me to represent my interests in Johannesburg. Now, can you, do you think, conceal the map in such a way that these thieves cannot get hold of it?'

I sat silent a few moments thinking over the situation, then my eyes strayed to some books lying on the table between us. I took up one. It was *Lock on Gold*, a standard work.

'I will do my best,' I said at length.

'Trust no one,' concluded my employer, giving me money for my journey and the boat ticket. 'Rely on yourself alone. Put the map in your breast-pocket for the present, but find a securer hiding-place before you go on board. Good-bye, and good luck to you.'

My preparations were soon made, and the following morning found me on board the *Roman*. I had reduced my luggage to as small a compass as possible. It consisted of two small portmanteaus which would go under my bunk, some wraps, and a few novels, with *Lock on Gold*, the latter obtained from my employer to sustain my character as a mining manager, and with its covers encased in gray calico. I had joined the ship at the docks to avoid the crush at Waterloo, and to see the mouth of the Thames. There were two other men in my cabin, for the ship was full, every berth being taken, but they had not yet come on board, so I arranged my belongings at leisure, and then went on deck as we left the dock to smoke and view the river and the miles of wharves and shipping as we slowly and majestically steamed out to sea. The ship was nearly empty, and I passed a quiet twenty-four hours anticipating the coming duel which was to take place, and wondering if my simple scheme would be successful.

The mail-bags and passengers came on board at Plymouth, and a scene of animation and confusion followed; but a rough sea and headwind calmed the exuberance of many of the company, and the dinner-tables in the saloon that evening showed an abundance of empty seats. Both my cabin mates succumbed, and I left them white and groaning. Fortunately I was a good sailor; and, having enjoyed my dinner, later in the evening found myself in the smoking-room smoking one of 'Jim' Gibson's cigars and engaged in a chat with that worthy, who was most friendly and evinced some curiosity about myself.

I told my tale, which he accepted with perhaps suspicious readiness.

'Employed by Tring, are you? Peppery fellow; I know him well. We used to be friends; now he hates me like poison.'

He introduced me to his friends, Spellman, Dunbarton, and Vandermit, who severally expressed themselves delighted to make my acquaintance.

The first two or three days my adversaries only skirmished, tried to pump me, and dropped broad hints as to the advantages which would follow if I joined them—hints I ignored.

As, however, they felt pretty sure that I was the bearer of the coveted map, my portmanteaus were searched more than once, and my spare

clothes when I was absent from my cabin. It was Spellman who was told off for this portion of the quest; finding I was not very cordial towards him, he struck up a friendship for one of my cabin mates, which gave him an excuse for entering at all hours. I did not think it advisable to enlighten the latter, as my attitude was to blandly ignore my adversaries' behaviour.

Spellman's researches proving of no avail, the great endeavour to discover if I had the paper took place about a week after Madeira was passed. I was playing in a whist tournament, and noticed that Dunbarton and Vandermit were playing nap with the two men who shared my cabin. I guessed that Spellman was making a thorough search, and as soon as I was at liberty I hurried there.

It had indeed been thorough. Every article had been taken out of the portmanteaus and examined, and the portmanteaus themselves cut and hacked in search of a secret hiding-place. Everything had been scrutinised; even the gray calico cover pulled off *Lock* to make sure that nothing was between it and the binding. Nor was this all, for while I surveyed the wreck, I became conscious of an overpowering feeling of drowsiness, and knowledge came to me that I had been drugged. Too late I remembered having just accepted a drink from Gibson; but I had only sense enough left to tumble into my bunk before falling into a heavy sleep.

They no doubt searched me to the skin that night, for I slept as the dead; but though I woke next morning with a bad headache, I felt well pleased, for no result had rewarded their toil. Of course I made a fuss as to the conduct of some mysterious thieves, who had not even spared the lining of my boots, and certain inquiries were instituted which came to nothing. I innocently complained to Gibson as to the bad quality of his whisky, and there apparently the matter ended, for I was molested no more.

I felt that I had won, as I saw by my enemies' manner that they had decided they were mistaken in imagining I had the map; but great cautiousness was still necessary till the journey's end. Never crow before you are out of the wood is an excellent piece of advice. Still, feeling that the worst was over, a sense of calm possessed me as I lounged in my Madeira chair, under the shade of the awning, for the tropical sun was very sultry, and made iced drinks a necessity instead of a luxury.

Gibson continued good friends with me, and often came and chatted as I languidly studied *Lock on Gold* in my deck-chair. As a practical mineralogist, he pointed out the best parts to study, and I imbibed much information valuable enough had I designed to turn miner. He was an amusing man, and his creed simple enough -- 'Get money, honestly if you can; but get money.' A more efficient auctioneer for selling the numbers of the ship's run in the daily sweeps it would be impossible to find, and I enjoyed the privilege of acting auctioneer's clerk with *Lock* for a desk on my knee.

It was four o'clock on a Tuesday afternoon when we reached Capetown, and Gibson managed to get away by that evening's train, leaving two of his followers to bring his luggage on next

day when the rest of the passengers bound for the Rand travelled.

The third morning after landing found me in Fox Street, Johannesburg, seeking Howard's office. I had just seen the name on the window, and had ascended the steps to the door of the building when a passer-by pulled up on recognising me. It was Gibson.

'Hullo!' he said, 'where are you off to now?'

The time for caution was passed, victory was mine, and I could safely enjoy my triumph. I surveyed the baffled financier with a smile of infinite satisfaction, and replied:

'I am the bearer of a certain document from Mr Tring to Mr Howard.'

From the expression on my face and the accent on my words, he read the truth, and knew that I had baffled him, and his face changed. Words failed him, for he was taken quite by surprise, and bewilderment rendered him speechless.

Enjoying his discomfiture a few seconds, I turned and went in, leaving him on the pavement below the most unhappy man in Johannesburg.

Having entered the outer office and given my name to a clerk, I was speedily shown into Mr Howard's private room. He greeted me warmly, and in the same breath inquired if I had been successful.

I said I had.

'That's good news. I've just got my mail and heard of your coming. Look -- you see; the envelope has been tampered with! You are sure Gibson hasn't set eyes on the map?'

'Absolutely,' I replied, then gave him a short account of the efforts made to secure it.

'Ay, ay, they wouldn't stick at much; you're fortunate to get here with a whole skin. But where is it after all?'

In answer I produced *Lock on Gold*, and, taking my penknife, cut off the gray calico cover, which I had put on again after it had been pulled off. Then inserting the point into the cover itself, I cut it open. There, snugly concealed, lay the precious map. I had, before leaving London, cut the cover open with a sharp knife, and placing the map in between, glued up the edges with great care. Being unable to absolutely conceal the fact that the cover had been cut, I had put the calico cover over, and when it had been torn off by the eager searcher he had never noticed that the binding itself had been cut.

Thus, safely and securely, the map had travelled, unseen by any eye, untouched by any hand, and now, having placed it in the possession of Mr Howard, my mission as a special envoy was over.

With the knowledge gained by the map, Howard took steps which very shortly made the land where Pepworth Tring found diamonds the property of that worthy, and I know no more, as nothing further has been heard of the discovery -- no company has been publicly formed to work it. But I have a strong idea that the find turned up trumps, and that the reason of the silence is that it is too good a thing for the public to be admitted.

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HOW I WAS KNIGHTED.

By SIR RICHARD TANGYE, F.R.G.S., &c.

DURING the coming summer the court newsman will be busily occupied in recording the details of the numberless state 'functions' which will be held in commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne. And, doubtless, many of the representatives of our colonies and of foreign countries who will be received in audience by Her Majesty will, for the benefit of their friends at home, record their experiences of the ceremonials in which they have had the honour of taking part.

From time immemorial the sovereigns of these realms have been accustomed to receive into their presence certain of their subjects who have rendered more or less distinguished public services, for the purpose of conferring the ancient and honourable order of knighthood upon them.

I do not remember ever seeing any detailed account of this ceremony, and so, by the favour of the editor of *Chambers's Journal*, I am permitted to give an account of my own experiences at Windsor, premising that it was written originally for the benefit of my grandchildren.

Perhaps this brief account of the procedure 'by one who was there' may serve as a useful *vade mecum* for gentlemen who may in the future be called into the presence of the Sovereign to receive her gracious favour.

Every one knows that the intimation of the intended honour usually comes from the Prime Minister, who briefly states the grounds upon which it is proposed to confer it. In my case Lord Rosebery was good enough to indicate the services I had rendered the cause of Art Education in Birmingham as a reason why I should accept the distinction.

Having accepted it, I received an intimation from the Home Secretary that I was expected at Windsor on the 18th July 1894, by the one o'clock train from Paddington, and that special carriages had been reserved for the use of

those who, like myself, were going down to be knighted. Arriving at Paddington in good time, I soon discovered the Windsor train, and presently found myself taking part in a little comedy along with other 'knights-expectant.' Several gentlemen were walking up and down the platform in an apparently unconcerned manner, after having scrutinised the labels on the carriage windows, while others were somewhat nervously questioning the porters. Having made sure of the carriages while only two or three people were about, I went to the other side of the platform and pretended to have no further interest in the matter, all the while keeping my eye on the steadily-increasing number of arrivals. Presently two gentlemen passed me, and I heard one say, 'I'm sure he's one!' and then I had no doubt that *they* were bent on the same errand. 'Windsor train, gentlemen, said the guard; so we took our seats, and began to look at each other.

At Windsor Station we found carriages awaiting us, and were soon on our way to the Castle, being set down at a principal entrance. There was no one to receive us, and no response to the bell-pulling, so we ventured to open the door, and entered uninvited; still no one came to us, so we divested ourselves of our overcoats and hats, and became quite at home until we should be discovered. Presently a very fine specimen of the 'gentlemen's gentleman' came rapidly down a staircase, saying, in a rather haughty manner, 'Gentlemen, *gentlemen*, this is not the way in!' But we *were* in, and did not offer to go out again, so he took us along a gallery to another entrance hall, where we left hats, &c. Then we were taken through some more galleries, in one of which I met Lord Rosebery, to whom I had previously been introduced. After a little chat, I amused Lord Rosebery by telling him that my daughter had informed me that I reminded her of the longest day, because I was the shortest knight! (You know, I am not tall.) He said it was very good, and at the same time 'very bad' of her.

Presently we were summoned to luncheon, which was laid in one of the galleries, and served on silver plates. It was a very nice cold 'collation,' ending with an excellent hot rice pudding and dessert. A gentleman sitting next me had evidently formed extravagant ideas of what Royal grapes should be, for he said, in somewhat grumbling tones, that he 'grew better at home!'

After luncheon we were marshalled in a room adjoining the Queen's small audience chamber, and were then given a few instructions as to the order of proceeding. But before going down to Windsor I had taken the precaution to interview a gentleman who had already gone through the ordeal, and so was quite prepared for it.

Her Majesty being now ready to receive us, we were ushered into her presence one at a time. My turn was the twelfth; hence one of my friends has dubbed me the Twelfth Knight. The equerry took me to the door of the apartment, and then left me. It was a lofty room, but not very large, being perhaps forty feet long and of a corresponding width. The Queen was seated on a very low seat at the end of the apartment opposite the door; behind her the ladies-in-waiting were arranged in a semicircle, some of the princesses being on her left, and the lords-in-waiting and Duke of York on her right hand.

On entering I gave my 'best bow,' and, advancing a few steps, stopped, and bowed again, when I was introduced to Her Majesty (my name being pronounced wrongly); another bow on closely approaching her, and then dropping on my left knee, I extended the right hand, back uppermost—for the Queen has a great objection to moist palms. The Queen then laid her right hand—a very little, plump one—upon mine, and I kissed it.

Then she took a sword—dreadful moment!—and smote me—ever so gently—on my left shoulder, saying in very low, sweet, and soft tones, 'Rise, Sir Richard,' and I became a 'dubbed' knight, but not a 'belted' one, as now-days knights have to find their own belts.

Then came a very difficult part of the ceremony; I had to retire from the presence backwards. Now, I had always been going 'forwards' during my previous life, and was somewhat doubtful as to how I should perform this retrograde movement. I remembered the fate of the Mayor of Truro, who, having presented an address to the Queen on board her yacht in Falmouth Harbour, walked backwards into the sea. However, I stepped back a pace, and, having steadied myself, bowed, then another half-a-dozen paces, bowing again, and after repeating the operation once more, to my great relief, found myself at the door.

On getting out into the gallery, the gentlemen whose turn had not yet arrived crowded round me, wanting to know all about it, but I got away. Carriages were again in waiting to take us back to the station, but preferring to walk, and a servant having helped me to my overcoat, I left the castle. When, however, I got to the station, the man came panting after me, saying he had given me the wrong coat, so having changed it for my own and given him half-a-crown (telling him there was a whole one at the castle), he thanked me,

hoping he should 'have the honour of waiting upon me again,' and I departed, none the worse for the day's experience.

In the same year that I was knighted the Queen conferred a similar honour upon one of my former workmen, Mr T. Salter Pyne, the engineer to the Ameer of Afghanistan, in Cabul.

But this was not the end of my experiences. A few days after my return from Windsor I received an intimation from a gentleman writing from the office of 'The Board of Green Cloth,' inviting me to pay the sum of £25 (or thereabouts) as fees for himself and His Grace the Duke of —! About the same time, as may be guessed, I also received a number of begging letters.

The wearing of court-dress on such occasions is optional—a kindly arrangement, as it does not become persons of short stature; and in case of illness or inability to give personal attendance from any sufficient cause, patents of knighthood are issued.

I have alluded to the case of the Mayor of Truro, who fell into the water while walking backwards from the Queen's presence. On that same occasion the Mayor of Falmouth, who was a Quaker, waited upon Her Majesty to read the humble address of the Corporation, but on arriving, found he had omitted to bring it. Profiting by the sad experience of his worship of Truro, the Friend, who had conscientious objections to water baptism, especially by total immersion, took the liberty of retreating sideways, to the amusement of the Queen and her attendants.

I must not forget to add that a gentleman who had been knighted a few years previously told me he got into trouble with Her Majesty by prematurely rising from his knee, the Queen saying, as he thought rather sternly, 'Do not be in such haste!'

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER III.

FOLKS in St Petersburg were well aware that a battle was to be fought on or about the fifth of November by the troops engaged upon active service in the Crimea. On that day the churches and cathedrals of the capital were filled with the relatives of men and officers—wives and mothers, lovesick girls, sisters, even small children—upon their knees before the shrines of patron saints, pleading for intercession for the safety of their men-folk in Sebastopol.

Among these there knelt in a secluded corner of the Kazan Cathedral the graceful figure of a young worshipper whose whole being appeared to be absorbed in her devotions. Olga Markova knelt before the *ikon* of St Alexander Nefsky, her eyes fixed upon the figure of the warrior-saint, which they discerned but dimly, for they were full of tears, as her heart was of prayerful thought for her lover and the danger in which he stood about this time.

Olga Markova, which is feminine of Markof, was an extremely pretty girl for a Russian. She

had the fair, clustering hair that Russian girls delight in, and the pretty pink and white complexion which is equally common; but she was without the usual dumpty, or wide, or flat *retroussé* nose which nearly always, together with a huge mouth, spoils all the advantages gained by a pretty head of hair and a delicate complexion, and sometimes a lovely pair of eyes, in a Russian face. Olga had a refined little nose, and a very pathetic-looking pair of eyes; and though her mouth was somewhat large, her teeth were not, and so it did not much matter. Olga possessed another characteristic very common to girls of her nationality: she was intensely superstitious and a very devout church-woman; indeed, she had started at an early hour this morning for the cathedral in order to pray before the *ikon*, or picture, of her lover's patron saint, Alexander Nefsky, for the safety of Philipof during the course of the campaign.

Alexander Philipof, or Sasha as his intimates called him, was not much of a church-goer, though far from being a professed unbeliever; he left church-going to the ladies, as he was accustomed to say, whose prayers were far more likely to reach their destination than any his lips could offer.

Nevertheless, on the eve of his departure for the Crimea, Olga had induced him to accompany her—as a special parting indulgence to herself—to the Kazan Cathedral, and the pair had there knelt together before the shrine of the warrior-saint, Alexander of the Neva—who was Sasha's patron, and an exceedingly appropriate patron for so pugnacious and warlike a person as Alexander Philipof. This saint, one of the three titular guardians of St Petersburg, is declared to have wrested the Neva from its Swedish proprietors (they having stolen it from the Karelian Finns in still earlier days, and these again from the Lapps), and to have arrived at the spot now occupied by the city of St Petersburg seated upon a paving-stone, which floated upstream along the Neva in a manner somewhat unusual among paving-stones. This original *entrée* of the good saint into their stronghold so surprised the Swedes that they incontinently ran away.

The two partners of Alexander Nefsky in protecting the interests of St Petersburg are, I may add, St Isaac of Dalmatia, on whose 'day' Peter the Great happened to be born, and St Peter. I may add further, with apologies to those of my readers for whom the information is unnecessary, that St Alexander's triumph over the Swedes and his annexation of the Neva and district for Russia were not permanent, and that Peter the Great was obliged, a few centuries later, to fight his Swedish neighbours for many a long year before finally achieving that which in the first instance brave St Alexander, Saint and Grand Duke, performed with so much ease upon his buoyant paving-stone.

This then was the patron saint of Alexander Philipof, Olga's guardian and lover, who was coldly practical and critical where the girl was romantic and superstitious, and who laughed a good deal over the serious and rather tearful remarks of poor Olga, as the pair returned home together after their farewell expedition to the church, in which a notable image of the saint was hung. In this picture the warrior-divine was

represented as banging an adversary on the head, presumably a Swede, with some short sword or other weapon. The saint himself looked a very ordinary Russian Moujik, with long, white, patriarchal beard and hair, and a benevolent countenance, very much like that of any other of the thousand and one saints of the Russo-Greek Church calendar. No one would have imagined him capable of any sort of daring exploit, judging from the expression of his kindly old face; but that just showed, as Sasha remarked, what mistakes one may easily make in discussing things one knows very little about, such as saints.

This was the kind of remark that greatly shocked and distressed Olga at all times. It shocked and distressed her especially now, when he was on the very point of departure to the seat of war, and needed every scrap of countenance and protection that his saint could give him. To Sasha's horror and remorse she had suddenly burst into tears.

The two had just turned in at the front door of the house in which Olga occupied a flat when this unlooked-for event happened.

Sasha was a kind-hearted man, though a scoffer, and he was extremely fond of his ward. He put his arm round her waist and drew her to him gravely and tenderly. 'Come, come, Olga,' he said, 'you are a soldier's *fiancée*; you mustn't be weak and silly whenever I am ordered away on duty: it's unworthy of you!'

'Oh, but it isn't that!' sobbed Olga; 'I know you must go and fight those horrid French and English. The Tsar commands it, and he is our father; but what I *do* feel, Sasha, is your contempt for religion, and so on—and I hate to think that you have no reverence for your own patron saint, our great St Alexander, but only laugh at his *ikon* instead of praying to him and getting him on your side now that you are going out to battle!'

Sasha could not help laughing, though he was grieved to hurt the child's feelings.

'Really, Olga,' he said, 'you ought to have lived in the days of the siege of Troy; you seem to expect our nineteenth-century saints to come down and fight for their protégés in the battlefield in order to turn aside the bullets that are flying too straight or the bayonets that have a billet for some favourite's heart, just as the gods and goddesses did in the old days for their particular friends among the mortals squabbling below! I don't despise religion a bit in the world, I assure you, and I have the greatest veneration for St Alexander; but I really don't see why I should not say such prayers as I wish to put up anywhere else as well as before that too ridiculous *ikon*!'

'The *ikon* may be rather curious to look at,' said poor Olga, 'but I love it all the same; for I have always thought of it as representing the dear old saint overthrowing *your* enemies, Sasha dear—whether human enemies or ghostly ones, like temptations, or any others; but it is well to think that you are not against praying; and you will remember your saint whenever you happen to be in emergencies?'

'Yes, I'll promise to do that much for your sake,' said Sasha generously, 'if it's any comfort to you. But supposing,' added the scoffer, 'that

some other Alexander bears down upon me, and we both invoke my saint's assistance at the same moment! What is to happen then?

'You can pray, at all events,' said Olga, 'and I shall be always praying—and perhaps our prayers will prevail; the rest is the will of God!'

Olga was so deeply in earnest that Sasha felt a little ashamed and was silent for a short while. Then he gravely kissed her.

'You're a good girl, Olga,' he said, 'and I won't forget that there is a loving little woman at home who will stick up for me before God and man. I will remember what you say!'

Olga smiled radiantly. 'Yes, I am sure of that,' she said, 'because you will know how miserable I shall be without you, and how I shall pray night and morning for your safety; and you'll take care of yourself for my sake—and how can that be done better than by praying? Then there's just one thing I want you to promise,' she added; 'it's so easy—and so important!'

Sasha waited for further light with an amused expression, wondering what was coming next. Olga enlightened him rather shyly.

'If you should ever be in any sudden or terrible danger,' she said, 'I want you to promise that you will call aloud to your good saint, and also—Olga blushed—to pronounce my name at the same time'—she hesitated.

'Well,' said Sasha, 'go on—explain—I will do it, of course, since you ask me; but why—what for?'

'To the saint for help, of course,' Olga faltered, 'and my name because I can't help thinking that perhaps I shall be praying at the same time—and that I may be spiritually permitted to hear your cry, so that at the moment of danger I may intercede specially for you!'

All this Sasha promised faithfully to perform in case of emergency; and on his way to the Crimea, and oftentimes during the first few weeks of the campaign there, he enjoyed many a hearty burst of laughter over the little maiden's quaint ideas as to the utilisation of patron saints, and the miraculous carrying powers of loved voices raised in terror and despair a thousand or more miles away. And before very long Alexander Philipof enjoyed full opportunity, as has been shown, to remember and to fulfil, if he would, his promise to his devout little *fiancée*, and—well, handsomely forgot all about it.

As a matter of course St Alexander Nefsky forgot him in return; hence his position: wounded, and a prisoner in a hospital tent within the British lines!

It is to be feared that Philipof, though he believed himself to be honestly devoted to the girl he had left behind him in far-away St Petersburg, possessed a spirit which was more easily absorbed in matters military than by the nerveless dreams of love, and that in the storm and stress of war his thoughts rarely enough turned to pretty little Olga, praying—like hundreds of others of her sex on this day—in the gloomy cathedral of our Lady of Kazan; and that when he did—for a moment—spare a thought or two for her, though always regarding her tenderly, he would dismiss the vision somewhat impatiently, as of a being too frail and gentle and spirituelle to be the betrothed of a soldier.

CHAPTER IV.

Meanwhile Olga knelt and prayed before her beloved *ikon*. The church was dark; it was a winter's evening, and the only light which penetrated the gloom throughout the area of that vast, pewless nave was that of the candles, of all sizes and thicknesses, flickering before each sacred picture—the offerings of the pious and devoted. The air was heavy with incense, and the mist of it intensified the darkness, so that the worshippers could scarcely distinguish the features of the saints before whose *ikons* they knelt.

Olga knelt on and prayed, and cried, and prayed again. She had been occupied in this way the greater part of the day, and she was extremely tired. Occasionally she felt herself almost dozing, and was obliged to pull herself together in order to avoid falling actually asleep. But suddenly something happened which instantly roused her to more than her normal wakefulness—a voice—a whispered voice, which sounded strangely like her lover's, seemed to call her by name. 'Olga! Olga!' it seemed to say.

Olga started and looked round, but, beyond the indistinct figures of other worshippers kneeling here and there, she saw no one. It must have been fancy she concluded; she had almost dropped asleep, and the voice was from dream-land. What a shame to fall asleep over her prayers, and on this critical day, too, when all the prayers she could put up were sorely needed by reason of the danger in which Sasha might, even at this moment, be standing! So Olga returned to her devotions—fixing her eyes once more upon the figure of the saint.

At the same instant a very extraordinary thing happened, or, at any rate, seemed to happen. The candles flickering lazily before the *ikon* of Alexander Nefsky suddenly flared up, and Olga saw, for one moment, and saw very distinctly, the picture they illuminated—saw, too, that it was not the picture as she had known it hitherto. The saint was there, indeed, and he was beating down an adversary as before, but that adversary was bending now over a third figure—a wounded man lying helpless upon a mattress, and Olga distinctly saw the face of this third person, and recognised it as that of her betrothed, Sasha. She saw also that he who bent over the sick man was armed with a dagger, and that his countenance was as the face of those who lust to kill. For an instant only Olga distinctly saw this picture; then the candles dulled down into their usual feeble and economical lustre, the picture faded before her eyes, her heart beat wildly a moment, and then seemed to grow cold and stop altogether. Olga uttered a hoarse, stifled cry, and fell fainting to the ground. And there she lay, a prostrate devotee, upon her face before the *ikon*, until the attendants of the cathedral noticed something strange in her attitude, and went and examined into the matter; with the result that poor Olga was carried away home, with her brain hopelessly off its balance, and a raging fever gnawing at her vitals, and that she lay and tossed in her bed for many a long day and many a weary night before she awoke to a remembrance of the psychical phenomenon which had led to this upheaval of her cerebral economies.

And while poor Olga, a victim to overwrought

emotions, lay and struggled with the brain fever which had secured so terrible a grip of her young life, two wounded men in the distant Crimea gradually recovered of their wounds and grew strong enough to be removed from the discomforts of field-hospitals and overworked nurses and surgeons, and were sent home to St Petersburg to recover under more congenial circumstances.

Sasha Philipof, as soon as he could be removed from the English hospital, was exchanged for an English prisoner of similar rank; and as he and young Dostoief happened to be despatched invalided to St Petersburg by the same conveyance, it was only natural that the two should make friends by the way. As a matter of fact, the young hussar greatly took to his brother officer of the less aristocratic Okhotsk infantry regiment; and though Sasha cordially reciprocated his friendly advances, he could not help feeling that Dostoief's tone towards him partook somewhat of the *de haut en bas*, as though the Red Hussar were well aware that in fraternising with a linesman he was making a concession. Possibly Sasha, in the jealous dignity of the infantry officer, imagined more than really existed of this affectation on the part of Dostoief, who would doubtless have been extremely surprised if anyone had suggested to him that he had adopted this attitude towards his fellow-traveller. He was, no doubt, somewhat elated at this time by his good fortune in having galloped into the good graces of the Grand Duke Tsarevitch, though, to do him justice he never boasted of his achievement, or even informed Sasha of what had happened on the morning of Inkermann to gain him so influential a friend.

It was a long and a cold journey that these new friends were obliged to undergo before the comforts of home could be enjoyed. Nevertheless they were well content that winter had come, and with it snow-roads and delightful sledges to travel in; for the greater part of their journey was made by snow-track, and had they been compelled to have their wounded limbs pounded and bumped over the execrable things which, for want of another word, are called roads in Russia, the difference to them would have been very great indeed. As things turned out, the sledge-roads were new and good—for it was still early in December—and the sensation of scudding over these in comfortable *kibitki*, or tented sledges, added nothing to the pains and aches which the British bullets had already caused them, and the only regret either officer expressed as the sledges skimmed merrily homewards was that the horses' heads were turned away from the seat of war instead of towards it.

Both men, on reaching the capital, were perfectly sincere in their expressions of regret that the time for parting had arrived, and Dostoief and Sasha exchanged addresses and promised faithfully to look one another up before many days—and so they separated.

Great was the astonishment of Olga's faithful old nurse and housekeeper, Matrona, when the bell rang and young Philipof, whom she adored as Olga's lover, pale and gaunt, and with his arm in a sling, marched into the entrance hall. Sasha embraced the old woman and kissed her several times, Russian fashion.

'Why, Matrona—little mother!' he cried, 'what's

the matter? You look as though you had seen a ghost! You knew that I was coming about now, I suppose? Well, and where's Olga—out praying as usual, I'll be bound, dear, good girl!'

Old Matrona crossed herself devoutly, and her lips automatically murmured a favourite line or two from the litany.

'A ghost indeed; and who was to know the Lord would send you back so soon! Is the war over? My lamb, my lamb, you are pale and tired; come in! And what's this—your arm in a sling? Lord Christ, have mercy upon us!—what has happened?'

'Hasn't Olga read my letters to you? I wrote two—or got them written—to say I was coming! The little minx, she wanted to surprise you!' Sasha laughed gaily as he struggled out of his heavy fur coat—a difficult matter with one arm in a sling and the other almost equally helpless.

Old Matrona burst out crying. 'There are two letters lying by her bedside now—I can't read, you know; and she'—Matrona paused.

'Go on, go on!' cried Sasha. 'Is anything the matter? Where is Olga?'

'Oh, she is better, she's better, thank God; the doctor said so only to-day; but she has been ill, very ill, and nearly dead, my lamb, and knew no one, not even me; and she has talked, oh! such dreadful things—about murders and knives, and your good saint and you—it has made me nearly mad to hear it!' The poor old woman blubbered like a true Russian, and wrung her hands and crossed herself and blubbered again. Sasha, pale and troubled, put her gently aside, and passed straight into the sick girl's chamber.

'You must be very careful,' whispered old Matrona, finger to lip, as he paused a moment at the door; 'she is just asleep, and it is the first really quiet sleep she has had!'

Well was it for Olga that the first face she saw bending over her, and gazing with loving anxiety into her eyes as they opened after her very first, long refreshing sleep, was that of her lover. She was too weak to wonder, almost too weak to smile; far too weak to utter a word or to lay her hand upon his, or to move her lips in recognition. It was enough for her to lie still and gaze at him and then at the familiar objects about her room, and to couple one with the other and conclude, vaguely, that things were as they seemed, and that she was not dreaming but actually looked upon her betrothed, the object she loved best upon earth. The knowledge of his safety and his presence beside her were all that she needed just now; given this much, her youth and her good constitution did all the rest, and Olga soon grew stronger. After a day or two of alternate slumbering and semi-slumbering, Olga was able to smile and afterwards to whisper. Sasha observed her lips move and put his ear down to catch the words she tried to utter, but could catch nothing at first, so faint was the utterance.

Presently, however, after several attempts, poor Olga succeeded in articulating words which, to Philipof's bewildered ear, sounded astounding enough!

'I was afraid the good saint—was too late,' she whispered. Sasha shook his head; he feared the poor brain was still wandering. 'Shut your eyes

and have another sleep, darling,' he said; 'you'll be better soon now!'

And Olga, well contented to have him safe beside her, and not very anxious to make herself understood at the cost of so much exertion, did as she was bidden; she lay and smiled up at him for a minute or two and then fell asleep.

When Sasha inquired of Matrona how long her mistress had been ill and what had caused her illness, the old woman crossed herself and said, 'Lord have mercy on us, little pigeon, but that's just what nobody knows. It was the fifth of November—six weeks or more ago—and she was taken ill in church.'

'Ah! poor little thing!' Sasha thought, 'overdid that church business—I was sure she would!'

THE RESTORATION OF PAINTINGS.

By MALTUS Q. HOLYOAKE.

THE gifted Maria Edgeworth, whose moral tales were an educational force when this century was in its youth, in one of her writings inquired, 'Who in contemplating one of Raphael's finest pictures, fresh from the master's hand, ever bestowed a thought on the wretched little worm which works its destruction?' There is no doubt that observation fairly represented the frame of mind of the general public at the period at which it was penned. Visitors to art galleries then most probably strolled through collections without reflecting very seriously upon the insignificant insects that silently and ceaselessly assist the ravages of time. Seventy years have elapsed since Miss Edgeworth gave expression to her thought, and the valuable impetus to art given by the late Prince Consort, and the establishment of Government art-schools all over the kingdom have educated the British public in such matters. Magazines and periodicals not then existing, by reproducing famous pictures as illustrations, have assisted to make art popular, and knowledge of art and its treasures has, by lectures and exhibitions, become accessible to the meanest subjects of the Queen. Never before in the history of the world has there been so universal and intelligent an interest in all branches of art as now exists, and the good Maria's typical worm has, it is known, caused anxious consideration in many minds. Apart from the general public, it is evident that the owners of paintings, the value of which represents a goodly fortune, must feel concern at the influences that deteriorate their collections. The sixth Duke of Marlborough evinced continuous care of the Blenheim pictures, and checked by every precaution of the conservator's art the inroads of the infinitesimal enemy. The English Government on behalf of the nation purchased some of the pictures from his son, the late Duke, for considerably over one hundred thousand pounds, one picture alone costing seventy thousand pounds. Artists, also, who wish to be the famous old masters of the future and venerated by posterity, hold, so to speak, a Diet of Worms, to ascertain the colours and materials that will best resist the insidious but effective action of time. Picture restorers too, above all, meditate earnestly on the worm subject; their professional experience being in daily requisition to neutralise the injuries effected by the spiral twistings of the

persevering grub. There are restorers and restorers. One class would wash a picture as they would a door, plaster a fresh coat of varnish on, and deem it restored. Others will invoke the aid of pumice-stone or spirits of wine to remove the incrustations of age, and away go the old coats of varnish, and half the picture with them.

Inefficient restorers are legion; but the true restorers—with the artist's soul, who understand the composition of the colours used, and the method of painting distinguishing the different schools, periods, and masters, and the proper solvents and treatment required—are few indeed. Some owners of collections have a not unnatural objection to their pictures being either cleaned or repaired, bearing vividly in mind the scrubbing, plastering, and painting to which some works of art have been subjected by unqualified and ignorant persons. Artists themselves sometimes do not make the most desirable of restorers, as instead of patiently matching the specks of blemish caused by decay with the surrounding portions of the picture, so that it will be impossible to detect the restored spots from the original, they are often tempted by their mastery of the brush to repaint rather than restore, and there are notable instances of valuable 'old masters,' as they are termed, being served in this manner. Indeed, if a book is written on 'the vicissitudes of great paintings,' they will prove to be as remarkable as *The Vicissitudes of Great Families*, recounted by Sir Bernard Burke. But notwithstanding these facts, a great deal can be done for the preservation of old paintings by intelligent restoration. Re-lining the crumbling canvas of an old master with new canvas, or transferring a painting on worm-eaten wood to a fresh panel will appreciably lengthen the life of the picture. The removal of varnish that has become discoloured with years, and the substitution of fresh preservative coats, enables the delicate tints and lights and shades of a work of art long obscured to be once more observed. Fissures and similar injuries may be filled in with advantage, and it may be taken for granted that there are very few pictures of any age but have received some such attentions, or they would not be in a condition to hang in their galleries. The renovation described preserves the original touch of the vanished hand of the painter, and if it does not enable 'a thing of beauty' to be 'a joy for ever,' yet gives it a fresh lease of life without impairing its value or genius.

If neither brass nor marble can withstand
The mortal force of Time's destructive hand,
oil-paintings cannot be expected to be less perishable. If the couplet of Pope—

Beauty, frail flower which every season fears,
Blooms in thy colours for a thousand years—

is to be applied with reason and truth to the artists of the present day, it will ultimately be by the aid of the picture-conservator, whose functions have been lovingly and reverently delineated by the late Henry Merritt, a restorer of eminence, whose services were held in high esteem by the late Prince Consort, the sixth Duke of Marlborough, Mr Gladstone, and the possessors of the finest art collections in England. Mr Merritt thus wrote: 'The restorer who is duly impressed with the importance of his object, collects every-

thing relating to his craft, in the form of drawing, print, or etching, bearing the stamp of the master's hand. He seeks after the obsolete, pores over old books, gleaning here and there particular facts. In ancient mansion, gallery, or cathedral, wherever the old painters have left the impress of genius on the walls—in dim ancestral portraits or nobler visions of creative thought—there the restorer makes his study and his home. His well-taught eye detects the slow decay which lurks beneath the surface of resplendent colours. An atom of dust betrays to him the presence of the insidious worm; he watches the subtle film left by the moist air and baked by the sun or fire, as day by day its presence obscures each tender tint and softened hue. Whatever tends to injure the objects of his care arrests his attention, and ordinary decay, the consequences of neglect, or the effects of malice, he labours to repair. Bending before the sacred ruin, he regards it with no less awe than if he were conscious that the author of the work still lingered near. Harbours no mercenary thoughts, he rises to his task with just and conscious pride, feeling that the last will and testament of a great artist is in his hands, himself the chosen minister to carry out the last behest. Thus cheerfully, with light and gentle touch, he day by day reveals some portion of the buried treasure—some gleaming fragment of poetic thought.

In Westminster Abbey, on the southern wall of the Sacristy, is a remarkable and interesting painting of King Richard II., which has been subjected to both the species of restoration to which reference has been made—the ignorant and the intelligent. This picture, which dates from the fourteenth century, is the oldest historical portrait in England. Its restoration has been attempted by incompetent hands on several occasions. During the last century one Captain Broome was appointed to clean and restore it. However, he evidently did not understand the art of restoration, and made short work of the process by simply repainting the portrait, carelessly making several variations from the original. This repainting, unfortunately, had been partially done before more than once, with the result of totally obscuring the original portrait. Thirty-one years ago Dean Stanley, on the advice of the late George Richmond, R.A., entrusted the picture to the experienced hands of the before-mentioned Mr Henry Merritt. Mr Merritt, under the superintendence of Mr Richmond and the late Sir George (then Mr) Scharf, succeeded in removing the various coats of paint with which the picture had been encumbered by barbarian restorers of the past, and disclosing the real features and form of the unhappy monarch whom Shakespeare has portrayed, which had not seen the light for over a century and a half. Mr Merritt's complete restoration of a painting which is five hundred years old was considered a wonderful achievement in art circles at that time.

It is not often that the general public have opportunity to obtain a glimpse of the mysteries, or are admitted to the penetralia of the restorer's art. Mr Merritt, however, kept a detailed journal during the progress of the work, to which Mr George Richmond, R.A., contributed occasional remarks. An extract or two will show the in-

teresting and delicate nature of the operations, which in this case were of an exceptionally important and hazardous nature :

'September 25th, 1866.—Mr Richmond worked cleaning tippet, and removing thick layer of lead. Pure tempera painting found underneath with brown varnish. Cleaned face, which came out as now seen, saving an injury on right temple, particle of the nose, and a spot below the mouth, which are still to be pointed out. The eyes had been slightly rubbed, and required trifling repairs. Scratches are on the face, evidently the work of malicious persons. These scratches are still to be seen from a side-view.'

Note by G. R.—'Mr Merritt with great courage and equal skill removed the thick coating of repainting from the left side of the face, revealing one quite unlike that which was taken off; hair red, colour of the eyes gone, but the colour of the flesh quite that of a red-haired person, and I think the eyes have been blue.'

'September 26th.—Mr R. worked on chair and robe. Removed opaque oil, and found below it transparent crimson, rich and deep, like Venetian red.'

'September 27th.—Mr R. worked on chair, robe, and right hand. Removed black outer frame, and recovered a large piece of the footstool, and, up the side, a finely preserved Gothic ornament, supporting elbow of throne. The frame had to be broken off the picture in very many pieces. It hid about four inches in width along the bottom of the picture, rather less at the top, and about two inches on each side.'

'September 29th.—Mr R., occupied in endeavouring to remove morsels of stucco-diaper background, found evidence of an older background under chair-ornaments, where the gold is still seen, and around the hair. The older background was apparently reddish, gilt in oil, and covered with undefined sprigs and scrolls, as now seen in the openings of the chair-back. Mr R. found the clumsy diaper-stucco laid on so as to cover and mar the contours in many parts of the chair and outer tresses of the hair. The true outlines, recovered by the removal of the stucco, are now visible. Mr R. also worked an ornamental collar above tippet, bringing out oak-leaf.'

Note by G. R.—'On the collar false emeralds had been painted, covered with thickly-painted high-lights to make the sparkle, all in wrong places.'

Note by G. R.—'Happily the raised crown was in composition, about one-eighth of an inch thick, which Mr Chance (a practical gilder) very carefully and skilfully chipped off. In flaking off the false globe and cross that springs out of it, we were very careful to note how the cross was inserted into the ball or globe. (A comparison between Verne's and Carter's engravings discloses a difference on this point).'

'October 2d.—Mr Chance slowly uncovered the raised gold, which hid the true crown, sceptres, and globe.'

Note by G. R.—'Mr Chance uncovered a shadow falling from the right thumb upon the globe, and found also that the little finger of the left hand came outside the sceptre, and was not, as the prints represent, hidden by it.'

'October 4th.—Mr Chance found gold under pinnacles of crown, further supporting the im-

pression of a plain gilt background prior to stucco.

'October 5th.—Mr R. superintended the removal of the outer raised sceptre, when the top ornament came out in fine drawing and shading.

'October 12th.—Found the blue tunic thickly painted over, and upon this ground the letter R, with crown and sprig, with the circular ornament, was coarsely stencilled. On removing these ornaments, nothing remained save the false blue covering, and on removing that, the letter R, crown, and circular ornament came to light as now seen.'

After this efficient restoration the picture was covered with glass, and has not since required any further attention. Visitors to Westminster Abbey should not omit to examine this interesting portrait.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER XXI.—THE BAR SINISTER.

It was a close night: the men were smoking their cigarettes on the terrace. Cripps was one of them; he was staying the night; he wished himself a hundred miles away. But Francis Freke took him in hand; they disappeared together, and a minute later the billiard-room windows burnt out of the night.

Mr Sellwood was left a little in the cold. Claude and Jack were pacing the terrace with linked arms and lowered voices, and he wished to speak to Jack. Mr Sellwood knew all. He was deeply sorry for Jack, for whom he had done his best at dinner by talking incessantly from grace to grace. The Home Secretary could be extremely entertaining when he chose. He had chosen to-night—as much for his daughter's sake as for Jack's. Olivia was his favourite child.

But then Dalrymple had not been there to heckle and insult his superior; he was gone nobody knew where. Not that he was gone for good, the luck stopped short of that. It appeared, however, that he had been excluded by a majority of two to one from the triangular council in the Poet's Corner. Since then he had not been seen; but his bag was still in his room, and it was only another of his liberties to absent himself from dinner without a word.

Olivia was playing the piano in the drawing-room. The windows were wide open, and Mr Sellwood listened with his white head bent in sorrowful perplexity. The execution was faulty, as usual, because Olivia was an idle musician; but there was feeling in her fingers, she had a certain 'touch,' and her attempts were better to listen to than some performances. To-night they went to her father's heart. The imperfect music spoke to him with the eloquence of broken words. It told him of his child's necessity for action in the stress of her anguish. It told him also of her love; and here was this poor fellow, so taken up with Claude that it was impossible to say to him what must be said as soon as possible.

Mr Sellwood gave it up for the present, and went to look for his wife.

'There's only one more thing, old man,' Jack was saying, 'and then I'm done. I don't want to load you up to the eyes with messages and all that. But I should like you to take care of this little bit of a key, and give it to her as soon as ever you think fit. It belongs to that chain bracelet business I got her for her birthday. As you know, I first wanted to give her a ring, but she wouldn't have it; and when I changed it for the bracelet, which cost about half as many shillings as the ring did pounds, I couldn't look poor Hopgood in the face. It was such a sell for him. So we were going back to-morrow to get the ring for our engagement, and to look old Hopgood in the face. That was one of our plans; we made so many when we were out this morning! I never knew a morning go at such a lick. But I remember it all—I remember everything. I've started going over every word we've said, so that I shan't forget anything. There's not such a vast lot to keep in your head. Only a day and a half of an engagement; but I've got to live on those thirty odd hours for the rest of my time.'

Claude looked away; the drawing-room windows were a blur to his eyes; and Olivia's erratic rendering of Chopin filled in the pause. It was the incoherent expression of unutterable emotion. Jack listened also, nodding time with his head. The calmness and the nobility of despair had settled on his spirit, as on that of a captain going down with his ship into an icy sea.

He talked on, and his tone was entirely his own. It was neither bitter, querulous, nor wilfully pathetic; but chiefly contemplative, with a reminiscence here and the discovery of some consolation there. He recalled the humours of the situation, and laughed outright but staccato, as at remembered sayings of the newly dead. Beyond the loss of Olivia he had little to regret; even that would make another man of him for ever and a day. (So he talked.) And his English summer would be something to look back on always; it was pleasure to the good, which nothing could undo or take away; the experience of a second lifetime had been crammed into those few weeks. Let him remember that when he got back to the bush. Suppose he had never left the bush? Then he would never have seen the old country, and seen it (as he said) from the front seats; he would never have found his own soul, nor known the love of a lovely girl, nor the joy of life as he knew it now. So he was really to be congratulated to the end; there was no occasion to pity him at all.

Claude, however, was not comforted; he had never been so wretched in his life. And he showed it so plainly, and was withal so conscious of the display, that he felt quite sure that Jack's ingenious consolations were not meant entirely for Jack. He was ashamed of himself on this, as on every other score. He was to blame for the whole business. It was he who had scoured Australia for the Red Marquis's son. Nor could he believe the other's protestations of personal solace and resignation: they had been made with wistful glances at the lighted windows, glances that Claude had seen as they both leaned back against the balustrade.

'Hallo!' cried Jack suddenly. 'Here are Mr

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Sellwood and Lady Caroline coming to have it out with me. Better leave me to them, old man.'

'All right,' said Claude, 'but we have lots more to talk about. Where can I find you, and when?'

Jack hesitated; the Sellwoods were within ear-shot as he whispered, 'Twelve o'clock at the hut! And Claude walked away, with his hand aching from a sudden and most crushing grip.

'My wife and I would like to speak to you,' said the Home Secretary, halting in front of Jack with Lady Caroline on his arm. 'My dear fellow, we are so very sorry for you: we know everything.'

'Everything!' echoed Lady Caroline, with slow dramatic force.

'Thanks to Jack,' put in her husband sharply; 'he gave instructions that we should be told at once. It was so very good of you, Jack, my boy, to think of us in your trouble. You have behaved splendidly all through; that's what makes us all feel this so keenly; and I am quite sure that you will behave nobly now. My dear fellow, it isn't the fact of your not being the Duke of St Osmund's that forces me to take this tone; it's the unfortunate circumstances of your birth, which have now been proved, I am afraid, beyond the possibility of that doubt which nobody would welcome more thankfully than myself. We are all very fond of you. I for one have learned to admire you too. But this most miserable discovery must alter everything except our feeling towards you. We are bound to consider our daughter.'

'Our youngest child,' said Lady Caroline. 'Our ewe lamb!'

'Of course,' replied Jack. 'I see what you mean. What do you want me to do?'

'It may seem very hard,' said Mr Sellwood, 'but we wish you to release Olivia from her engagement.'

'To release her instantly!' cried Lady Caroline.

'I have done so already,' said Jack, with some disdain. 'Did you really think, sir, that I should wait to be told?'

Mr Sellwood muttered an oath as he held out his hand.

'It was a mistake; I am in the wrong; forgive me,' he said; and his hand was crushed in its turn.

'And what did she say?' asked Lady Caroline. 'She refused to be released.'

'I knew it! George, the girl is mad.—And pray what do you propose to do now?'

'What do you think I ought to do?'

'Ought?' cried Lady Caroline. 'I think you ought to go away and never see her again!'

'Or, rather, let us take her away,' said Mr Sellwood. 'It may seem hard and abominable; but there's no doubt that from our point of view a separation is the most desirable course.'

'It is hard,' replied Jack; 'but, as it happens, it's the very plan I hit on for myself. Not a word, sir, if you please. You're perfectly right. She could not marry me now; and I would not marry her, knowing what I am. It's out of the question altogether. But Olivia is quite on to do it—at least she thought she was before dinner. I haven't seen her since. I'm not going to see her again. She's just the sort of angel who would swop heaven for hell to stand by the man she was fond of! But she mustn't be let. I agree

with you there. It was the first thing I thought of myself. I made up my mind to clear out; and, if you want to know, I'm off now.'

'Now!' cried Mr Sellwood.

Lady Caroline said nothing.

'Yes, now; there's no more to be said; and the sooner I get it over the better for all concerned.'

'But, my dear fellow, where are you going, and what do you intend to do? Have you made any plans? I wouldn't do anything in a hurry if I were you; we're a family party here; and all our wits put together would surely be better than yours! We might fix up something between us.'

Jack shook his head.

'You're very kind,' he said; 'but it's all fixed up. I'm going straight back to the bush. This is Thursday; I can't catch to-morrow's steamer, but I can do better. I can take the overland express to-morrow night, and join last week's boat at Brindisi. I'm going to sleep the night—never mind where. I don't want old Claude on my tracks; I've said good-bye to him too, though he doesn't know it either. He wants to do too much for me altogether. If you stay up with him till twelve, he'll tell you he's got to look me up at the hut; and you may tell him, sir, if you'll be so good, to sit tight, for he won't find me there. Say good-bye to him for me, and tell him he's been the best mate I've ever struck; but don't let him come up and see me off. Crippis I'm to meet in town. I'm going to let them finance me out again, since they fetched me home in the beginning; but not another red cent will I touch. Why should I? I've had a good run for my money—that is, for theirs. I'm no worse off than I was before. I should even be sure of the same old billet on Carara that used to suit me well enough, if I only could see Mr Dalrymple before I start; but I'm bothered if I know where he's got to.'

Mr Sellwood was heavy with thought; his wife had left them; and he had heard a sob in her throat as she turned away. He had an inkling of her treatment of this poor fellow; he did not know everything, but he knew enough to hail his wife's sob with a thankful thrill. So there was a heart in her somewhere still! He had thought otherwise for some years; in another moment he doubted it once more. Lady Caroline appeared at the drawing-room window, shut it, and drew down the blind. And yet—and yet her husband had himself been wishing for somebody to do that very thing!

Olivia was still at the piano, and her performance had sounded so very near at hand until now. It was near enough still; but the shutting of the window deadened the sound. Chopin had merged into Mendelssohn. Olivia happened to be note-perfect in one or two of the *Lieder*. Her father had never heard her play them so well. But Jack had no music in his soul—could not whistle two bars in tune—and though, even while speaking, he listened visibly, it was not to the music as music, but to the last sound of Olivia he was ever to hear. Her voice or her footstep in the distance would have done as well.

'I wouldn't go to-night, old fellow,' the Home Secretary said at length. 'I see no point in it. To-morrow would do just as well.'

'Ah, you must think I find it easy work!' exclaimed Jack, a little bitterly for once. 'It's not so easy as all that, and it's got to be done at once, when you're screwed up to it, or it may never come off at all. Don't you try to keep me; don't let anybody else try either! Let me go while I'm on to go—alone. I might take it different to-morrow!'

He spoke hoarsely; the voice was as significant as the words. Mr Sellwood was impressed by both; he followed the other to the nearest flight of steps leading down to the lawn.

'Let me come with you,' he urged. 'Surely there is something one can do! And I've never seen the hut; I should like to.'

'Wait till I've gone,' was the reply. 'I want you to stand in my tracks and block anybody from following me. Head them another way! Only give me a quarter of an hour to clear out of the hut, and another quarter's start, and I'm—and I'm'—

He lost himself in a sudden absence of mind. The music had stopped, and the night seemed insolently still. Jack was half-way down the steps; the Home Secretary leaned over the balustrade above. Jack reached up his hand.

'Good-bye,' he said.

Mr Sellwood, hesitating, kept his hand. A window was thrown up.

'Papa, is that you?'

'Yes, my dear.'

Mr Sellwood had turned round.

'And where is Jack?'

'Not here,' whispered Jack.

'Not here,' repeated Mr Sellwood; and, looking behind him, he found that he had spoken the truth.

'Then I'm coming down to you, and you must help me.'—

Jack lost the rest as he ran. He thought he heard his own name again, but he was not sure. He stopped under the nearest tree. Mercifully there was no moon. Olivia could not have seen him, for he himself could see no more of the Towers than the lighted windows and their reflections upon the terrace. On that dim stage the silhouette of Mr Sellwood was still discernible: another joined it: the two figures became one: and in the utter stillness not only the girl's sobs but her father's broken words were audible under the tree.

But Jack had fled.

He ran hard to the hut, and lighted it up as it had never been lighted before. He cut up a candle in half-inch sections, and stuck them all over with their own grease. Thoroughness was an object as well as despatch; nothing must be missed; but his first act was to change his clothes. He put on the ready-made suit and the wide-awake in which he had landed; he had kept them in the hut. Then he pulled from under the bunk the cage his cats had travelled in, and he bundled the cats into it once more. Lastly he rolled up his 'swag,' less neatly, perhaps, than of old, but with the blue blanket outermost as before, and the little straps reefed round it and buckled tight. He would want these things in the bush; besides, the whim was upon him to go exactly as he had come. Only one item of his original impedimenta he decided to leave behind; the old bush saddle would be a needless

incumbrance; but with his swag, and his cats, and his wideawake, he set forth duly, after blowing out all the candle ends.

The night seemed darker than ever; neither moon nor star was to be seen, and Jack had to stop and consider when he got outside. He desired to strike a straight line to the gates; he knew how they lay from the hut, though he had never been over the ground before. To a bushman, however, even without a star to help him, such a task could present no difficulties. He computed the distance at something less than a mile; but in Australia he had gone as the crow flies through league upon league of untrodden country. Out there he had enjoyed the reputation of being 'a good bushman,' and he meant to enjoy it again.

But the ground was new to him, and he was out of practice. Instead of hitting the wall, and following it up to the gates, as he intended, he erred the other way, and came out upon the drive at no great distance from the house. This was a false start, indeed, and a humiliation also; but his thoughts had strayed back to Olivia, and it was as if his feet had followed their lead. He would think of her no more to-night.

The drive was undesirable for obvious reasons; still it was the safest policy to keep to it now, and the chances were that he would meet nobody. Yet he did; a footstep first, and then the striking of a match, came to his ears as he was nearing the gates. He crept under the trees. The match was struck again, and yet again, before it lit. Then Jack came out of hiding, and strode forward without further qualms, for the flame was lighting the cigar and illuminating the face of his friend Dalrymple.

'Hallo, sir!' began Jack, 'I'd given you up.'

'Why, Jack, is that you? I can't see an inch in front of my cigar,' said the squatter, as the match burnt itself out on the gravel where it had been thrown.

'Yes, it's me. Where have you been?'

'Where are you going?'

'Mine first,' said Jack.

'All right. I've been talking to Master Hunt. Now, where are you going?'

'Back to Australia!'

Jack waited for an exclamation; for some seconds there was none; then the squatter laughed softly to himself.

'I thought as much!' said he. 'I knew exactly what the lawyer came to say, for I saw it in his face. Now tell me, and we'll see if I'm right.'

He was right—or so he said—when Jack had told him all. They had retired under the trees. By the red end of his cigar the squatter had seen Jack's wideawake; using his cigar as a lantern he had examined the cage of cats; whereon his face would have proved a sufficiently severe commentary had there been any other light for Jack to see it by.

'Now,' said Dalrymple, 'stand tight. I've got something to tell you, my boy!' And he told it in the fewest whispered words.

Jack was speechless.

'Nonsense! I don't believe it,' he cried when he found his tongue.

'But I'm in a position to prove it,' replied the squatter. 'I'll give you a particular or two as we walk back to the house. What! do you

hesitate? Come, come; surely my word is good enough for that! Do be sensible; leave your infernal cats where they are, and come you along with me!

MUMMIES AND SCARABS.

By J. C. HAIG.

WHEN the ancient Egyptians adopted the practice of embalming their dead and burying them with relics they had no idea that they were founding a lucrative industry for their degenerate descendants. The trade in mummies and scarabs and other antiquities has assumed large proportions in these modern days, when so many well-to-do Englishmen and Americans and Europeans find their way to Egypt to winter. It is now so extensive an industry that it has become a positive nuisance, and the pleasure of the traveller in visiting the Pyramids, or the tombs of the kings, or any of the other wonderful Egyptian monuments of antiquity, is somewhat modified, if not altogether destroyed, by the importunities of a mixed crowd of Arabs, who keep thrusting a miscellaneous collection of relics into your face as you walk or ride along. The favourite offering is a scarab. For various reasons—especially because their marvellously rapid multiplication in Nile mud suggested spontaneous generation, and made them seem good emblems of creative power—scarabæi or dung beetles of several species were venerated by the ancient Egyptians, were embalmed after death, and were painted and sculptured on monuments, and engraved stone scarabs were frequently put beside the mummies in the sarcophagi. Sometimes they put a number of scarabs, often in the form of a necklace. The genuine scarabs are made of stone, curiously coloured, or of metal with an inscription on the back to denote the person beside whom they were laid. If genuine antiques, they may of course be very valuable, especially if they contain the 'cartouche' (as the designation is called) of some royal personage. But if not genuine they are comparatively worthless, and it is not easy to tell the difference. Thousands of imitation scarabs are sold to confiding tourists every year; and of course, if the latter are persuaded in their own minds that the relics are real, the pleasure conveyed will be exactly the same, and there is no more to be said. Many tourists give five or ten shillings for a scarab which is not worth as many pence; if it were genuine it would be worth at least as many pounds.

The dragonians generally profess to be experts in the matter of scarabs, as well as all other relics, and they certainly succeed in looking very wise when purchases are submitted to them. But when you ask them *how* they know a real from a fictitious scarab, their answers are usually evasive and distinctly disingenuous. You generally find that the dragonian's game is to discredit all the scarabs bought by his party, and then to confide to the travellers one by one that he has a genuine, an undoubted scarab for sale, which he will give you as a great personal favour, because he has taken a liking to you, for, say, a couple of pounds. One dragonian was cross-questioned upon such an occasion by an American tourist. 'Well,' said the latter, 'I feel inclined to buy it;

but how am I to know that it is real?' 'Because I tell you, sir,' said the dragonian, drawing himself up, 'and I ought to know.' 'Yes, that is all very well for you, but how am I to know that you ought to know?' 'Because, sir,' said the dragonian, wholly unconscious of giving himself away, 'my brother and I have the chief manufactory for scarabs and antiquities in this part of Egypt, and we know more about them than anybody.' The American did not buy the scarab. The curious thing about these relics is, that the natives seem to carry them about with them at all times, and they often spring them upon you when you are least expecting them. You may be taking a walk through a quiet village, when every second Arab you meet comes up to you in a most confidential way, and whispers under his breath, 'Like to buy a nice scarab to-day, sir?' Or you may be taking a walk by the banks of the Nile, and admiring the beauties of nature, when, out of a grove of palms or a stack of sugar-cane, a barefooted Egyptian will dart upon you with a mummy's hand or a mummified hawk, or something equally hideous, and will perfectly scare you out of your senses with his voluble importunities. Probably in a weak moment you will offer five or ten piastres for the hawk or the hand, and then, when you are going back to your hotel, you will be pounced upon by the same individual and a retinue of relatives and attendants, all armed with various monstrosities, which they insist upon your taking at any price. They seem to think that Britons and Americans were especially created by Providence for the purpose of buying 'antiques.'

Even the most wideawake individuals will occasionally find themselves taken in, if once they begin to purchase antiques in Egypt. The most elaborate traps are laid to ensnare the likely purchaser, and no end of trouble is taken to induce him to part with his piastres. One case may be given as an illustration. It was announced at Luxor one year, while a lot of wealthy tourists were in the hotel, that a tomb had just been opened in the vicinity and a mummy-case discovered inside. The case was to be opened in the house of one of the consuls, and a celebrated German antiquary was to be present at the opening. At least so it was reported by all the dragonians and donkey-boys and other tourists' friends in the vicinity. Tempted by the chance of witnessing the opening of a mummy-case, a numerous company of visitors assembled at the consul's house. There was a slight hitch at the outset, as the celebrated antiquary, who was expected by a steamer which had just arrived, did not appear; but after waiting half-an-hour the consul said that it was evident some accident must have detained him, so they would just go on with the unceasing and unwrapping of the mummy, and perhaps the German would turn up before the preliminaries were concluded.

As a matter of fact the celebrated antiquary did not turn up at all, nor was he even a passenger on board the steamer which had just arrived at Luxor. So the ceremony went on without him, and a great deal of fuss was made over the opening of the box. The men were so afraid that they would injure anything inside that they took about an hour to open it. When at last it was opened, it was found that there was another case, a beautiful blue and yellow case, inside,

covered with hieroglyphics—very indistinct and evidently very ancient. This case, again, was very carefully handled, and another hour consumed before the actual mummy was reached. The excitement and expectation of the audience had now reached fever-heat. In the inner case, beside the mummy, was found quite a number of relics, including a necklace of scarabs. 'Evidently some royal personage, gentlemen,' said the consul, 'from the double case and the number of the relics.' Then a competition began to secure the rarities. Prudence was thrown to the winds. Here was an opportunity to secure a real case of mummy-wheat or a venerable scarab, or some other antique. There could be no doubt about the credentials of these relics, when the buyers had seen them taken from the mummy's coffin with their own eyes. So they gladly paid their pounds for the coveted beetles, and thought themselves lucky in getting them at the price. Yet, sad to relate, the whole thing was a 'plant;' and after the tourists who formed the party had taken their departure it was currently reported in Luxor that more than one scarab manufacturer was contracting with a maker of mummy-cases in Cairo for the disposal of his relics to advantage, and the good offices of the consul were in great request. But that gentleman, who was himself a victim and not a plotter, had received a lesson which he was not likely to forget, and never again lent himself to scarab sales or mummy resurrections.

If even the residents are taken in by the devices of the antiquarian dealers, it is little wonder that the unfortunate tourist has so often to pay for his experience in Egypt.

THE NOBLE FIVE.

A TALE OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA GOLD MINES.

v.

A CHARMING girl is one thing, a female detective is another; but Miss Innes seemed to combine the two vocations. Of her delightfulness I had not the slightest doubt; but if she had, as I suspected now, come to Warm Springs camp expressly to watch the Colonel, she was the most quaintly amateurish and incompetent spy—too transparently honest for the game.

A wily old rogue was the Colonel, evidently possessed of some knowledge which made it worth his while to lay hands, by fair means or foul, upon the apparently worthless claim which Tom would not sell. Why he wanted such a property was past conjecture; why Miss Innes tracked his every movement was—well, her own business, and no concern of mine. On the day following our visit to Tom she wanted my escort to the Noble Five.

Half that night I had been awake in my tent planning such a picnic as would please her. Great, then, was my wrath when I learned at breakfast-time that the Colonel had hired the only two horses in camp. To reach the snow-line on foot was too hard a climb even for Miss Innes, and it was only a happy afterthought which suggested our visit, well supplied with candles, to the Queen Victoria Cave.

A thousand feet below Tom's claim I had been prospecting along the hill-side on the Queen's

Birthday, and quite by accident discovered the entrance to this cavern.

Here, under the archway, Miss Innes rested after our long climb, while we had luncheon, and afterwards she made me light my pipe. Out of the twilight behind us loomed five gaunt columns of stalactite; before us, the low archway of rock was half-choked with bushes, through which there shone a glimpse of the sunlit sky.

The memory is sacred to me, because it was there that I asked Miss Innes if she cared for me. We spoke not of the present but of the future, when by hard work and hard-won money I might be enabled in a year or two to speak more definitely. I do not care to write further upon this matter; but it was with renewed reverence for her, with something perhaps of added self-respect, that I led her, when we had lighted our candles afterwards, over the rough ground towards the interior of the cavern. The place had always impressed me as being very beautiful, but now the glittering walls, the shadowy, ghost-like assemblages of columns seemed part rather of some unearthly and unreal vision. The floor of white stalagmite was broken in places by little pools, each like a turquoise set in fretted ice. We stumbled upon exquisite growths like living coral, and all the while below the hollow floor one could hear the murmur of a rivulet which was lost near the mouth of the cavern in a channel which apparently had no outlet.

'I'm afraid,' said Miss Innes, 'this is too good to last.'

'Like a dream of love,' I answered. 'There are the big rocks ahead, barring the end of it. Nobody's been beyond that.'

'Those big ugly boulders'—she peered away into the darkness—'is there no way past them?'

'No way.' I was looking, not at the barrier, but at her fair face. 'And even,' I said, 'if we could get past them, they would mark the end of all that is beautiful in this cave.'

'But why?'

'Because,' I said, willing to go on talking that I might see her face for a while in the magical candle-light, which made a delicate pallor seem almost transparent, 'these big boulders are of granite. It's only in the limestone that one gets all these lovely incrustations; beyond is the cold, hard granite under Tom's claim.'

'Under the Noble Five?'

'Yes; his "ground" begins on the mountain-side just above these boulders, and if the cave went on it would tap the ledge he discovered at a depth of one thousand feet.'

'Then this is a natural tunnel to "prospect" his mine! If he blasts his way in past these boulders until he cuts the vein, he can prove exactly how much it's worth—eh, Jack?'

It thrilled me to hear her call me Jack for the very first time.

'Why,' she said eagerly, going up to the boulders, 'they've been blasted away here at the top.'

'What!'

'Somebody's been here and opened a passage—see!'

She was right. Over the fallen rock a way had been cleared, large enough at least to wriggle through.

Who on earth had been developing Tom's claim without his leave?

We climbed, with many a scratch and bruise, over the obstruction; beyond, we found the cave still leading away into the depths of the mountain. The walls were bare, and yet they were not of granite. The stream was visible here trickling along the floor, sometimes spreading across it.

'Let us go on,' said Miss Innes; but I was busy chipping at the walls, examining scraps of rock with curious yellow stains and streaks of gray.

This was what the ill-fated Irishman had found, in the float of the Noble Five, which he supposed to be chlorides of gold.

'Why,' said Miss Innes, 'look here. What's this?'

'Ledge matter,' I answered absently, for I was busy; 'we're in a mineral ledge, softer than the country granite, channelled out by this water.'

'Look!' she cried hysterically, thrusting a piece of rock before my face.

It was gray quartz, speckled with native gold.

To think that, save for Tom's monument to the dead, this upper granite country had never borne the marks of a prospector's pick!

Warm Springs was a silver camp, but here in granite, supposed to be absolutely barren, we had found the richest mineral ever seen in all Kootenay—a discovery which could hardly be matched in British Columbia.

But were we the discoverers?

'Let us go on,' said Miss Innes, burning with impatience.

So on we went; it seemed for a very great distance indeed, at least to the limit of Tom's claim, which extended fifteen hundred feet from the limestone-granite contact.

And there we came to a still more tremendous discovery—a larger transverse passage lined with yellow chlorides and with native gold. We had only been following a feeder—a branch; this was the main lead!

We turned to the left, under a low arch, and beyond the farther end was a candle burning. So, the low place coming to an end, we stood erect in a large chamber—face to face with the Colonel.

VI.

The Colonel had evidently been awaiting our entry, for he was looking along the sights of a revolver; but that mattered little, because Miss Innes was behind me.

'Thumbs up,' said the Colonel briskly.

'I think,' said I, without stirring, 'you'd better drop that gun; it might go off.'

'It might,' the Colonel soliloquised, 'unless you throw up your hands.'

'You seem to forget, Colonel, that you're not in a free and enlightened republic, but under monarchical misgovernment. If you hold me up somebody will be holding you up presently—by the neck.'

'I wouldn't speechify,' said the Colonel, 'or I'll shoot.'

'What!' said Miss Innes valiantly; 'with a lady present?'

The Colonel lowered his weapon, bowed to Miss Innes, and apologised.

'Are you healed?' he asked of me, with some little anxiety in his voice.

'I'm an Englishman,' said I stiffly; 'we don't need weapons.'

The Colonel began to bluster.

'Wall, may I ask what the—excuse me, madam—what the—why you are trespassing on my property?'

'Your property? We are in the Noble Five claim, which belongs to my partner, Blind Tom.'

'Which was the late property—I may say the late lamented property—of your partner.'

'And when, sir,' said I pretty hotly, 'did he part with this claim?'

'When, sir, he neglected, sir, to do assessments, sir, on his property; when his property lapsed to the government, and I had the honour to relocate this claim as the "American Eagle."'

'Will you oblige me, then, by showing your license as a prospector?'

'Sir, I do not know you in this matter. I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance.'

That was one in the eye for me.

'Where are your proofs,' said I, 'that my partner let his claim lapse by not working it?'

'My proofs,' said the Colonel blandly, 'also my witnesses, shall be forthcoming when I'm good and ready. Are you the government? or the government's dog? or a hair on the tail of the government's dog? Sir, you are not so much as the nameless insect on the hair of the tail of the government's dog, so I'll trouble you to mind your own business.'

'All right, Colonel; we'll see what the camp has to say.'

'I would,' he sneered. 'Advertise, and there'll be such a gold-rush as was never known in this benighted province. You Britishers are a played-out institution. Anybody but a lunatic would be away by this time staking out first extensions on the "American Eagle" lead.'

What an awful mess I had made of Tom's business! My very threat the first time I saw the Colonel might have suggested the claim-jumping. I suppose that there would have been a considerable row in that cave, but Miss Innes kept her head.

'Come away,' she said; 'this man is only a common thief, and we're wasting time.'

I followed her, out by the way we had come, through the natural tunnels, and on with all possible speed, until we saw the glimmer of daylight ahead.

'Stay, Jack,' she said.

'Why should we stay?' I was still shaking all over with a foolish rage.

'I have something to tell you.'

'Well?'

She made me sit down in the place where we had eaten our luncheon, and the memory of what had passed between us restrained me to some measure of patience.

'Jack,' she said, 'do you know why I came to this camp?'

'To watch that scoundrel?'

'Yes, dear; he is my brother's agent.'

'Your brother?'

'My brother is manager of the smelter at Macdonald City.'

'Surtees? The deuce!'

'It's true, dear. Fred went to London on business, sending the Colonel back here. While Fred was away I said I would go down to stay with some friends at New Westminster. He thinks I am there now.'

'Then you're not Miss Innes?'

She held up both hands to hide her blushes, but I saw that the tips of her ears were coral red.

'My name,' she said, 'is Rose Surtees. Don't forgive me, Jack—it was too wicked.'

I could forgive her easily enough, particularly as my name was not Jack Robinson—but that I abstained from mentioning.

'Fred Surtees, of the Macdonald City Smelting Company, Limited, is your brother; and the Colonel is your brother's agent, to bond or buy mining properties. How is it the old villain does not know you?'

'He never saw me. Do you think Fred would know such a man except on business? Oh, do forgive me, Jack! Say you forgive me!'

'Miss Surtees,' I said, making a big show of severity, 'what made you track this man like a detective?'

'Because he looked—I don't know what he looked—I don't know anything; only, please, I knew he would cheat my brother; but, oh, I was so frightened when I came! Fred knows so little, you see, about anything. That's why he got the post from Uncle—I mean Lord Armitrude.'

'I see. But now you've got on the wrong side of the fence by mistake. You came here thinking your brother was to be cheated. You've made a mistake—your brother stands in to make a pile of money. If this Colonel gets the Noble Five as your brother's agent, you've made your fortunes.'

'Oh, how can you! Oh, you—you!—'

She stood up in a magnificent rage, her hands turned into fists, her teeth clenched.

'You—you brute! There! How dare you say such a thing of my brother? Fred may be a fool, but he wouldn't insult his sister's—I mean his brother's—oh! what do I mean?'

I tried not to smile, but all of a sudden her face changed and she burst into tears. 'Oh,' she cried, 'and after I'd been eating humble-pie—miles of it—and you insult me!'

'Rose,' I said gently.

'Well?' She looked up. 'What?'

And then she came up, throwing her arms about me, while she laid her head on my shoulder to cry in peace.

Suddenly we were both disturbed by a low whistle, coming from the mouth of the cave. I felt ready to murder the intruder, but it turned out to be only Blind Tom.

'Xcuse me,' said my partner, 'this ain't in my line.'

'Go away, Tom—for goodness' sake, clear out. You're interrupting.'

'I guess not,' said he, coming down into the cave; 'this thing's business. See here, Jack.'

'Oh, go away!'

But Miss Surtees saw something in Tom's manner which I had missed. 'You see,' she said, smiling through her tears, 'Mr Robinson and I are engaged.'

'Eh?'

'Yes, Tom,' I broke in, 'if you must interrupt us, you'd better begin with congratulations.'

Then Tom did a thing of which I had not thought him capable. 'Xcuse me, ma'am'—he bent over her with a curious, awkward bow, and took her hand in his most reverently—'I don't know, ma'am, as I congratulate you—seein' as he's only a common scrub proprietor, like me.

Besides, I'd like to kick him handsomely for his confounded cheek—ay, that I would, Jack Robinson.'

He grounded a double-barrelled shot-gun which I had not noticed, then drew the rough of his hand across his forehead. 'Lord,' he continued, 'what a chase I've had to find you! You wasn't up at the Noble Five, but they tells me on the main trail as you'd come here. Jack, my claim's been jumped! Where's that Colonel?'

I pointed tip the cave. 'You'll find him there.'

Tom took up the shot-gun. 'Where?'

'Hold on,' I called, for he had taken my candle and was going. 'We've got to come to some arrangements first.'

'What d'ye mean?'

'I'll rouse the boys. We'll have this claim-jumper run out of camp.'

'We?' Tom was angry now. 'This Colonel is my meat, not yourn.'

'Tom,' said Miss Surtees, at which he held back in surprise. 'You don't mind my calling you Tom?'

'Thank you, ma'am.'

'The man who sent this thief to the camp is my brother.'

'Eh?'

'My brother, Mr Surtees, is manager of the Macdonald City Smelter. He sent the Colonel here.'

'What!'

'But,' she went on firmly, 'he didn't send this man to steal for him. I knew that he was bad; I was afraid he'd get poor Fred into trouble. I followed him.'

'Well, I'll be shot! But weren't you scared, miss?'

'I was at first; but then I met Jack, you see. I knew I was quite safe then.'

'You can trust me, ma'am, but'—he chuckled—'I dunno about Jack.'

'And now?'—Miss Surtees was quick to seize her advantage—'you'll help me, won't you?'

'Help you? Course I will. What's wrong?'

'Then I want you, Tom, to keep our prisoner here in this cave for three days. Then I want Jack to take me home to Macdonald City. That will take a week, as there's no steamer.'

'But,' said I, 'if your brother's in England?'

'He'll be home on the twenty-fifth, and this is the nineteenth. Besides, he'll behave dreadfully if I'm not there to meet him.'

'I don't see,' said Tom, 'what that's got to do with me and the Colonel. Now, a charge of buckshot!—'

'Would hang you, Tom; so shut up.'

'I think, Tom, if I can see my brother before the Colonel gets at him, you needn't fear for the future.'

'But he's jumped my claim!'

'Yes; but it's no use to him without Fred's money. My brother found the man starving—gave him work out of pity. His only chance is to sell the claim to my brother before he finds out that it was stolen.'

'You've a level head, ma'am,' said Tom respectfully. 'But surely this wild-cat claim of mine ain't worth so much fuss?'

'This wild-cat claim?'

'Of course. Why, ma'am, the whole location ain't worth more'n ten cents. I'm only keeping it up as a sort of monument to them as died.'

'Good gracious, Jack, he doesn't know! Tell him! Tell him quick!'

So I told Tom of the wonderful discovery in the cave—that his wild-cat claim, his monument to four dead men, was worth millions.

'Don't you see?' I said as he sat down on a boulder in utter amazement. 'We take with us proofs of your claim, and proofs that the Colonel jumped it. Miss Surtees will get the Colonel out of our way. When she tells her brother about this discovery, he'll provide you money for development work; he'll get the proposition afloat in London. What a monument to those poor devils who were lost! The first "shipping" mine in this camp!'

Tom looked up, his mouth quivering. 'And where do you come in?'

'I don't see what that's got to do with it.'

'So I'm to make my pile by settin' here watching up the cave with a gun. Where do you come in?'

'I understand,' said Miss Surtees.

'So do I,' for I had taken her hand. 'Perhaps if Mr Surtees makes a million or so from my information, he won't mind if I make him my brother-in-law—eh, Tom?'

'You can save the claim from this Colonel on one condition, Jack.'

'And what's that?'

'You take a third interest in the property.'

PRODUCING A GREAT DAILY PAPER.

VERY few of those who are accustomed every morning to find their favourite paper on the breakfast-table ever think of the enormous output of skilled labour which that paper represents. If they give the subject any thought, their minds produce little which is definite or accurate. They have a floating consciousness that in the previous small hours some person or persons wrote articles—the 'leading articles'—and that the editor chose the subjects even if he did not do the writing himself. What correspondents, reporters, sub-editors, and editors really do is a sealed mystery to the general public. Only those know who form, or have formed, portions of the great journalistic machine, which is at its fullest activity when the British public is in bed.

The machine never stops. It is like that sacred lamp which had burned a thousand years before the intrusive Yankee blew it out. It is a machine which nothing can stop save bankruptcy alone.

By day, reporters are scouring the earth and the sea, and the places under the earth, for news, and the advertisement office opens its doors to orders and cheques. In the afternoon printers and sub-editors begin to come in. In the evening, Fleet Street is throbbing; the editor and his assistants are knee-deep in letters, copy, and proof-sheets. Telegrams arrive every instant; packets pour in by post and by hand. At midnight the head-printer begins to say that he cannot take any more copy. At one o'clock he asserts, with tears, that he has enough set up to fill two papers. After two A.M. nothing is put into type but what 'must go in.' At two-thirty the editorial staff put their feet upon the almost bare tables. At three the machines—real printing-machines these—are trying to get into running order, and the weary night-staff are thinking of cabs. At the

same hour the publishing-staff are getting out of bed. Then comes the next stage. The paper is printed. By half-past four the publishing office glows with life and light. Vans roll up to the doors, swallow up vast loads, and bear them hence to every railway terminus in London to catch the newspaper trains, and so to the breakfast-tables of the public, and to the bookstalls of W. H. Smith.

It is a great work which is done every day in Fleet Street, probably a greater work than any corresponding quarter in the whole world can boast.

A great newspaper has an organisation of extraordinary complexity and delicacy, and of this we will endeavour to give the reader some slight idea. Its scope includes everything—literally everything—and its space is limited, so that there is a constant struggle going on. But for the most careful organisation, something of importance would certainly get omitted, and other unimportant things would occupy an undue amount of space. The various departments are therefore allotted a certain amount of space—which varies at different times in the year and as circumstances change—and a certain amount is left open for general news and for accidents. By 'accidents' we mean such things as the death of the Prime Minister, or an earthquake. The organisation of a great paper must be rigid and yet elastic—rigid in checking exuberance, and sufficiently elastic to allow three columns to go to the printer after two A.M., if such a thing should suddenly become necessary. The most important fact to be realised about a great daily is, that every night about four times as much stuff goes into the waste-paper basket—good stuff, too, sometimes—as can possibly be crammed into the paper. There is never any difficulty about 'filling up' even on Christmas-day.

No one but a newspaper-man can realise how many departments a newspaper has, and how they all clamour for space. Take the City Department, for instance. Somewhere near the Stock Exchange is an office presided over by a City editor. Here the article called 'The Money Market' is compiled. It contains movements in the prices of stocks and shares: a list of these prices, announcements of dividends, and so on. Allied to this department are the market reports—mysterious information about cotton and pig-iron. The space occupied by this sort of matter is rigid. A sub-editor cannot cut a slice out of the 'Share List' without spoiling the whole thing. The City copy is the despair of the chief editor and the joy of the business manager—the revenue from joint-stock company advertisements is vast. Then there is sporting intelligence—cricket or football, horse-racing, rowing, tennis, cycling, even chess. There is something of importance every day which must be published. But this matter can be cut down, so there is hope in this quarter from the editor's point of view. Parliamentary news involve immense trouble and expense. The staff of reporters in the Houses of Parliament belonging to a great London daily comprises from twelve to sixteen men. Their work begins about three o'clock in the afternoon and ends usually at midnight. They have to report all speeches of importance in both Houses, and prepare their copy for the printers, so that there is no delay after the report reaches Fleet Street. They do not mind whether their copy is cut down or not—it makes no difference to them.

The editorial staff have the worst time when parliament is not sitting, for then political leaders of every colour make speeches all over the country. The local correspondents of the paper arrange for reporting the speeches, and are directed from London as to how much to send. There would be trouble enough if they kept to their instructions, but unfortunately they rarely do. They *will* send too much. Then the sub-editors not only have to make the speech read correctly, but also have to condense it. Doing this on telegraphic 'flimsies' is horrible work, especially when one part of the speech comes in at midnight and the rest as late as half-past one. Of course each police and law court has its authorised reporter, who is told to send only important cases, and insists on sending all sorts of rubbish. This ineradicable habit involves more condensation, and more recourse to that trusty ally—the waste-paper basket. But for iron resolution and an exact knowledge of how much space different kinds of MS. take up when put into type, the paper would overflow every day. A capable sub-editor can estimate almost to a line. Shipping news is supplied by Lloyd's and by foreign agencies, and is not exacting. The same may be said of the 'weather.' Both of these items, however, are as rigid as the 'Share List.' They must go in whole, or it is hardly worth while putting them in at all.

We have not spoken yet of Foreign News, though, of course, this forms one of the most important—if not the most important—of departments. Its size varies immensely, and it is one of the most difficult to estimate. Perhaps for a week or two there will be no trouble, and then will come a thunderbolt—like President Cleveland's message, for instance—and Foreign News will run all over the paper. It has one advantage, in that everything must give way to it; but this only shifts the difficulty of finding space on to the shoulders of some other department. Foreign telegrams arrive very late, too, and without any warning, so that the pressure will come just at the time when the editor has arranged everything comfortably, and the head-printer has begun to 'make up' the paper. Then all the bother begins again. Proofs have to be cut down; matter which is in print has to be put aside altogether; and perhaps a wretched leader-writer must be dragged out of his cab—in which he was going home—to write an article. The same kind of commotion can occasionally be caused by Home News, but not nearly so often. Sometimes it happens that a very big man dies without giving decent warning by means of illness. His obituary will, of course, be already prepared—perhaps written years before and revised periodically—but its insertion will bring up the difficulty of space and occasion an article. However, most men seem to die in good time for the papers, or else considerably wait till after they have 'gone to press.' Ordinary Home News causes little trouble. It is very elastic, comes in as a rule in good time, and the evening papers have given a most desirable warning of what is to be expected.

The leading articles, which look so imposing, and which express the policy of a paper on important subjects, are not troublesome from the point of view of organisation. The editor decides

comparatively early in the evening what subjects shall be written about, and he, of course, also directs the lines which the articles shall follow. Unless he be a very wise or very foolish man, he does not attempt to write any of them himself.

From what we have already described, it will be sufficiently clear that an editor who really edits a paper has no time to write. He is responsible for everything, and has in the last resort to arrange everything. He or his assistants read every line of every proof-sheet; they have to be constantly on the look-out for insidious errors, for 'doubles'—the same news given twice or given previously—for matter which should not be published, and for numberless other equally important things. A really competent editor is one of the rarest men in the world, and one of the ablest. The work of a Cabinet Minister cannot compare with his work. A really good editor can direct the policy of his paper on some essential matter at one moment, and at the next detect a 'turned comma.' Nothing is too great and nothing is too small for his instant comprehension. His nerves must be of iron or worry will kill him; he must feel his responsibility, yet carry it lightly; he must not harass his staff. Above all, his liver must be in good order. Indeed, we think that, given this and ability, the other qualities will be added unto him.

SUNDOWN.

GONE is the day of pure delight;
In silvered purple comes the night.

So sweet and short have been the hours!
I gathered joys like summer flowers.

'O weary night!' I cried, 'begone!
And leave me and my life alone.'

But the gray chambers of the west
Grew golden for their regal guest.

And in the east a starry sheen
Was herald to the dusky queen.

So now my joyous day is done,
And now has set my brightest sun.

Nay, murmur not! Beyond the hills
How many hopes his dawn fulfils!

Some glad youth eastward turns his eyes
To see his great day's dawn arise.

Some maiden, snowy-souled and sweet,
Blushes her wedding-morn to greet.

Some strong one, thrilling for the fight,
Now springs to draw his sword and smite.

While I rejoiced, these waited long;
My night brings on their morning song.

O sun, beyond the hills unseen!
Their day make glad as mine has been.

MARY W. M. FALCONER.

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THE ROYAL STANDARD OF ENGLAND:

AS IT IS, AND AS IT MIGHT BE MADE.

By JOHN LEIGHTON, F.S.A.

At the present time no apology need be made for suggesting the still further nationalising of the Royal Standard of England by the adoption of an extra device to include Wales—England, Scotland, and Ireland alone being at present represented. To have England on the fourth quarter as well as the first is not only superfluous, but wholly excludes gallant little Wales, which is not represented at all.

The claim of Wales to occupy a distinct position on the Royal Standard will surely be admitted by everybody; it is so obviously just, the only wonder is it has not been satisfied ere this. Consistency, if no stronger argument be used, seems to urge this recognition, so long delayed.

The story of the evolution of the Royal Standard is interesting reading. For our purpose it is not necessary to go into detail; suffice it to say that when James VI. of Scotland succeeded as James I. to the throne of England, and to the throne of Ireland as well, he quartered the arms borne by previous English sovereigns with those of Scotland and Ireland, the second quarter being the lion rampant of Scotland, and the third the harp of Ireland. The Act of Union made no provision for a special mode of marshalling in Scotland. But in Scotland the Scottish Arms claimed precedence in the quarterings, occupying the first and fourth quarters, while England was relegated to the second. The official seals of Scotland have uniformly thus reversed the places of England and Scotland. On some Scottish state edifices also we see the unicorn placed as the dexter supporter, whilst the lion rampant gardant is relegated to the sinister side. The Royal Banners of England have always borne the same blazonry as the Royal Shields. The English claim to the crown of France was represented by fleurs-de-lis on the Royal Arms and Standard beside the lions of England down to the reign of George III.; under William III. the Coat of Nassau appeared;

and from the accession of George I. till the separation of Hanover from England at the accession of Victoria, the Arms of Hanover were duly shown. But since the union of the crowns of England and Scotland in 1603 the Arms of England, Scotland, and Ireland have always had their place in Royal Arms, though various modifications have from time to time been adopted—as at the legislative union of England and Scotland under Anne in 1707, and after the union with Ireland in 1801. But the old and close connection of the ancient British monarchy of Wales has never been recognised on the Royal Standard of England, or of Britain. The end of the nineteenth century sees us advocating the tardy recognition of a claim long established, just, and historically indisputable.

Wales, it is true, has no distinct Order of Knighthood, no High Court of Justice, no herald or pursuivant to proclaim its devotion and loyalty to the Crown—privileges enjoyed by both Scotland and Ireland. But it has a new university and an old language all its own; and since the days of Aneurin in the 6th century its literature has been rich and varied. It is a Principality; and the eldest son of the reigning sovereign, though not born Prince of Wales, invariably receives the title at an early age. Welshmen have no reason to be ashamed of their own romantic history in the old days of warfare; and the country still bears its part bravely in furnishing Welsh regiments to the army, whose ranks are filled with men as loyal and ready as any among her Majesty's forces. The records of the Welsh regiments furnish as striking incidents of bravery in the hour of battle as any of their English, Irish, or Scotch compeers. St David of Wales, who, unlike St George, St Andrew, and St Patrick, was a native of the country of which he is patron, may well demand equal honours for his sons.

None of the early rulers of Wales could have had an heraldic shield, though Griffith-*Ap-Cynan* is said to have borne 'Argent three lions passant gardant.' A MS. in the College of Arms assigns to

Rodri Mawr, the last king of all Wales, 'Argent three lions passant guardant, coward, gules'; and it is this coat that the eldest sons of Edward IV. and Henry VII., *quasi* Princes of Wales, used upon their seals. Except that they were in red, and that they wore their tails between their legs and rested upon a field of gold, these lions might have been those of England. The generally accepted 'arms of Wales' are those borne in the thirteenth century by Iorwerth and by the Princes of Wales down to the last prince, Llewelyn.

Thus it will be seen that if we were to select the fourth of the party per cross for a device typical of Wales, the colour of the field would remain unaltered, while for distinction it could be occupied by four golden lions passant guardant, in lieu of three as at present. In this connection a red dragon (for which authority is not wanting) has been advocated as being distinctive and not unknown to the Standard, Henry VII. and Henry VIII. and Elizabeth having used it as a supporter to the Royal Arms. Further, Welsh regiments have blazoned it upon their colours, to whom it is supposed to have come down from Cadwaladr. As to the idea of adopting a lion rampant, for which there is also some historical justification, it would never do for it to come under the Scottish device of this same character, even though divided by a double tressure. Hence the most convenient and distinctive plan would be to increase the present three lions passant guardant in the fourth quarter to four in number, trespassing on no existing device, and keeping as close as practicable to historical precedent. The Prince of Wales bears a 'Shield of Pretence' 'for the Principality of Wales'; and while we would not wish to see this abandoned, we would fain behold Wales taking her rightful place, and that which seems specially designed for her, in the fourth of the party per cross either with lions or a griffin.

The Royal Standard as it is may be described heraldically thus—1st and 4th, gules, three lions passant guardant in pale, or, for England; 2d, or, a lion rampant gules, within a double tressure, flory counterflory of the last, for Scotland; 3d, azure, a harp or, stringed argent, for Ireland.

The Royal Flag, as suggested, would be described thus—1st, gules, three lions passant guardant in pale, or, for England; 2d, or, a lion rampant gules, within a double tressure, flory counterflory of the last, for Scotland; 3d, azure, a harp or, stringed argent, for Ireland; 4th, gules, four lions passant guardant in pale, or, for Wales.

Wales once granted her proper place upon the Standard, the question of an Order for the Principality would follow in natural sequence. At present those Welshmen whom the Queen delighteth and desireth to honour have to be content with decorations devoid of any special Welsh significance. And all the time there is ample historical material to constitute a handsome, if not unique, Order with both collar and jewel.

Reconciling elements from all the devices that have been used, we would, for an Order of St David, adopt dragons, *dos à dos*, interchanged with leeks and ending in a cross patté fitché, the jewel being the three feathers with the motto, *Iech dien*. Those familiar with the shields depicted

in the old authorities as belonging to the early Welsh kings will recall that they bear golden crosses patté on fields of azure; the later kings the same, with the addition in each quarter of a martlet; whilst later on the princes adopted the four lions.

On the coinage the design would afford scope for working in the Leek, in connection with the Rose, the Thistle, and the Shamrock.

Thus it will be seen that, without drawing much upon the imagination, keeping within the limits allowed by heraldry, and confining ourselves to purely national emblems, we succeed in according the brave little Principality her place on the Royal Standard and Royal Arms, which would then do equal-handed justice to the claims of the four sister nations.

To accord Wales her place on the Standard and coinage, and to institute a new Order—the Order of St David—would surely be a most appropriate and lasting memorial of her Majesty's long record and beneficent reign. Those taking an interest in this matter are referred to the *Book Plate Annual* of 1894–1895, by the present writer, where will be found illustrations both of the Standard and the currency 'as it is and as it might be made.'

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER V.

OLGA's complete recovery was only a matter of time, and it was not long before she was able to sit propped up in bed and to talk a little, when one of the first uses to which she put her tongue was to beg her lover to tell her all about his doings in the Crimea, a task which was the more welcome to Sasha, because, in his opinion, the next best thing to being in the thick of the fun was to recall the time when it had been his happy fate to be a mark for British and French bullets. Sasha recounted with glee his experiences at Alma and in many skirmishes, to all of which Olga listened with some impatience, though the narrative was interesting enough. But when her lover began to tell of the assault at Inkermann, and of the repeated disasters to the Okhotsk column on the 5th November, and of his own loss of temper on that occasion, and the result to him and others, then Olga grew interested indeed.

'And did you think of your good saint during all those hours of danger?' she asked, as Philipof paused for a moment in his narrative.

'Well—I'm afraid not—not just then, anyhow!' Sasha made this admission somewhat shamefacedly. 'But listen to what I'm going to tell you now, for I think the next bit of news will please you,' he added. 'After I was shot down—shot in both arms, mind you! by way of being rendered extra-ultra disabled—the English surgeons carried me off to a hospital tent, where, I must say, they treated me very kindly. The man I shot in the cheek was put into the same tent, to my disgust—he was always a bad lot, and I disliked him from the first. Old Anton, a sergeant-major in my company, was with us too—so there we were, quite a family party. Well, late

in the afternoon, I was snoozing, I think, rather sleepy after the chloroform they gave me when they picked about for the bullets, when I suddenly felt a queer sensation and looked up. For an instant I thought it was a nightmare. Petka's black villainous face was bending over my own, and I could hear the brute's teeth grinding as he muttered something uncomplimentary—I forget the words—and said I might prepare for a dog's death. I saw he had a big knife in his hand, but I was absolutely helpless, with nothing but two shot arms to protect myself withal. Now then—you'll like this bit of it, Olga!—at this critical moment I remembered our conversation at parting, and my promise to you, and I shouted your name, as loudly as my rather weak voice would utter it, twice, and at the same instant prayed like anything to Saint Alexander Nefsky. Old Anton, who was asleep also, awoke at my cry, and sprang up just in time to bang Petka on the head with a tent-peg before he had plunged his knife into me. So, you see, I am a better boy than you thought,' added Sasha, playfully patting Olga's thin hand with his own, 'and if I hadn't called out either your name or something equally rousing, old Anton would never have waked in time, and I should not be here at this moment!'

But Olga did not receive this communication in the same jesting spirit in which it was made. She was very pale, and grave and serious, and her voice was full of awe. 'O Sasha,' she whispered, 'how wonderful it all is! Don't you see it, dear? There is more in this than appears. It was not old Anton who rose and smote your murderer.'

'Oh yes, it was, though,' said Sasha. 'Why, what do you know about it?'

'I know this,' said Olga solemnly, 'that I heard you call my name, and that I saw the good saint, as it were, rise in the midst of his *ikon* and strike down one who threatened you. O Sasha, do believe me! it was not Anton, but the saint himself, on whom you called for help, who came to protect you in your need. Glory and praise be to him and to the Lord, his Master and ours!' Olga's thin hand wandered over her breast in a feeble delineation of the sign of the Cross. Sasha looked astonished, as he certainly was.

'Now I come to think of it,' he said after a little, 'old Anton is rather like the saint in our *ikon*; he wears the same kind of beard, and is decidedly patriarchal. Of course I may have made a mistake, and—well, it's awfully good of the saint to take so much trouble over a poor fellow; but, you know, Olga, old Anton declares he did it, and I had the greatest difficulty in exonerating him before the British guard. They thought there had been a row, and that he had murdered Petka; and besides, again, I gave him ten roubles by way of a tip for saving my life; and, do you know, I can't help thinking it was old Anton that did it, inspired by the saint, of course!'

Sasha treated the matter with almost indecent levity; but Olga was not going to abandon her position as one who has peered behind the veil, and her lover's matter-of-fact incredulity pained her much and angered her not a little; so the matter remained *in statu quo*, excepting that Sasha had the grace to admit that it was odd she should have seemed to hear him call at about the right or corresponding moment. As for the vision, that of course was hallucination; and as for the saint's

share in the business, Sasha gladly agreed that a few candles placed before his *ikon* would be a neat and appropriate concession to Olga's view of the case. For himself, he was very grateful, he said, to the saint for waking old Anton, and still more grateful to old Anton for his agility with the tent-peg.

Nevertheless, Olga continued to firmly believe that both she and those she loved were among the specially protected; and this conviction greatly increased her content, and enhanced the confidence with which she looked out upon the future.

It was about a fortnight after Philipof's arrival that Dostoief called to see him. There was to be a review by the Emperor of certain troops about to be despatched to the seat of war, and Dostoief proposed to drive over to the Champs de Mars to have a look at them. Sasha was at Olga's lodging, and Dostoief had been directed to find him there.

This happened to be Olga's first appearance on the sofa in the drawing-room, and as she lay there white and frail, Dostoief thought he had never seen anything quite so beautiful. He had entered the room hurriedly, declaring that they must be off at once or they would be too late; yet now, when Sasha had eagerly fetched his furs and his sword, and prepared for instant departure, Dostoief suddenly discovered that it was earlier than he thought. Ought Philipof to leave his invalided friend? he asked.

'Ah! take him and let him enjoy the air and the review, Monsieur le Capitaine,' said Olga. 'He has been very good to me, and has stayed by me for a fortnight nearly, hardly leaving me for an instant.'

Dostoief did not think that could have been a very great hard-ship, and hinted as much; whereat pale Olga blushed, and looked more delightfully pretty than ever.

'I shall be so glad for him to have an outing,' she said feebly; and Sasha, feeling that he might, if he were quite honest, add that he too would be only too glad to leave the child for a while to old Matrona, seized his friend by the unwounded arm and dragged him away to the review much against his will. It was but a short walk from Olga's lodging in the Millionaya to the Champs de Mars, and the two men, each with one arm in a sling, agreed to walk it, which they did over the hard snow down the middle of the road. Dostoief was thoughtful, and did not talk much. Sasha was, however, very talkative, and was in the midst of an animated and entertaining description of Olga's surprising experience in the dusk of the Cathedral, when a sledge-and-pair dashed round a corner behind them, and before they had time to step out of the roadway and on to the pavement, was actually upon them, the horses barely pulling up in time to avoid knocking one or both of the young officers down.

Both turned angrily about in order to express their opinion of persons who allow their coachmen to dash thus dangerously round the corners, and Philipof had actually commenced to expound his views, when Dostoief laid his hand heavily upon his friend's arm. 'Stop, for God's sake!' he muttered. 'Look who it is!'

Sasha looked, and blessed his stars that he had not dived very deep into his vocabulary, for one glance at the towering figure in the sledge was

sufficient to silence the boldest tongue in the empire. Every Russian was afraid of Nicholas, the great autocrat, terrible always, doubly and trebly terrible at this time, by reason of the reverses of his troops in the Crimea, and the *sæva indignatio* of repeated disgrace to his arms.

The Emperor glanced at the two young officers with displeasure and impatience. His mouth opened to make some scathing remark, but ere it was made his eye fell on the wounded arms, and his intention changed.

'Ah!' he said, 'wounded officers—from the seat of war doubtless? Your name, sir, and regiment?'

'Dostoev, sire, of the Red Hussars,' said that individual.

The Tsar's eyes opened a little wider as though in surprise. 'Dostoev,' he repeated; 'I should know the name, I think. Stay!' He took a letter from his pocket and glanced at it. 'I thought so,' he said. 'I have heard of the service which you have rendered to me and to the empire. It was in my mind this very day to inquire whether you had arrived in town. I thank you, sir, in my son's name and my own, for your prompt action in a moment of danger. Stay!' The Tsar actually alighted from his sledge, about which a small crowd of hatless people had already assembled. He approached the astonished Dostoev, towering over the by no means stumpy figure of that officer, took him in his arms, and solemnly kissed him on both cheeks. 'It is in my mind to appoint you special aide-de-camp to my son, the Tsarevitch,' he continued, 'for I believe such as you would serve him well.'

Dostoev tried to reply that he would indeed do his best to justify his sovereign's goodness to him, but all he could do was to kneel in the snow and mumble something confusedly. Philipof, equally confused, wondered what on earth all this meant. But the Tsar's voice addressing him aroused him to attention.

'And who are you, sir?' asked Nicholas, returning to his usual cold and haughty manner.

'Philipof, your Majesty,' said Sasha, as boldly as in him lay, though he was as much afraid of the Emperor as the rest of the world—'Philipof of the Okhotsk.'

'The Okhotsk!' repeated Nicholas in his iciest voice, a voice whose tones, even when scarcely raised above a whisper, are said to have possessed the marvellous power of making themselves heard from one end of a large parade-ground to the other—'the Okhotsk? Fie, sir, fie! if I were an officer of that regiment I would rather have died on Inkermann field than live to own to it. Fie, sir, fie! 'tis a regiment of cowards!'

With these words the angry Tsar stepped into his sledge, and at a sign to the coachman, was borne away towards the Champs de Mars amid the shouts of the crowd, whom he saluted haughtily as he disappeared, having unconsciously done a fertile morning's work in that he had secured the devotion of one man for himself and his family for ever, and a good man, too; while, in venting his displeasure thus harshly and unjustly upon Philipof, he had deeply mortified and offended another and a better one, laying the first seeds of a feeling of aggrivement against himself and his house, which was destined to grow with the passing years.

Dostoev's head was too occupied, after the exciting episode recorded, to permit of his paying much attention to the review; and as Sasha was gloomy and indignantly silent, and nothing in the way of conversation was to be got out of him, the two young men did not stay very long, but returned, at Dostoev's suggestion, to Olga's lodgings in order to entertain her with an account of the review. Dostoev, in high glee by reason of his adventure, described for the invalid's benefit the honour accorded him by the Tsar, explaining casually what he had done to deserve it; though, to do him justice, he made very light of that part of the matter. Olga was intensely interested, and gazed at the young officer who had saved the Tsarevitch, and was fresh from the grateful embrace of the Tsar, with her big blue eyes wide open with wonder and admiration. As for poor Sasha, he neither listened nor spoke, but brooded in silence over the insult which the Tsar had heaped upon himself and his regiment in the ears of the people, and the heart of Sasha was even as lead within him.

SCIENCE AND SLAUGHTER.

THERE is a prevalent notion that the weapons of destruction invented by modern science will render war in the future far more dreadful and sanguinary than it has been in the past. We believe this notion to be a mistaken one, and venture to think that some facts in proof of our theory will not be uninteresting. So far from increasing the carnage of the battlefield, we hold that the tendency of modern arms of precision is to diminish it, and that science, by turning her attention to the instruments of warfare, may be regarded as a benefactor to humanity in disguise.

It will hardly be denied that, given equal courage, the nearer men can get to one another in combat the more deadly that combat will be. In hand-to-hand conflicts, one or other of the combatants must be killed or wounded. The earliest battles were a series of such conflicts, and the slaughter was terrific. The heavy *pilum* of the Roman legionary, hurled at a distance of a few paces by a skilled arm, could rarely have failed to be effective, and the discharge of that weapon was followed up by the deadly short sword at close quarters. The slaughter of the Goths at Naïssus showed how effective Roman arms could be, for, if some historians are to be believed, upwards of 100,000 of the barbarians fell that day—a record unequalled in the history of war.

The first long-range arm of precision which played a really important part in warfare was the English long-bow. The credit of discovering the true value of the archer must be assigned to that great soldier Edward I., who utilised the new arm with terrible effect at Falkirk, where the Scottish squares were riddled by the English arrows, and not all the skill and valour of Wallace could avert disastrous defeat, attended by the slaughter of half his army. At Cressy, Poitiers, Agincourt, and Flodden the deadly and continuous

shooting of the archers was the main cause of the English victories. So rapid was their shooting that an old chronicler says 'it seemed as if it snowed.' The carnage was fearful. At Cressy the French lost 1200 knights and 30,000 footmen out of an army of 120,000. Of course the archers only paved the way for the charge of the men-at-arms; but the deadly effect of their shooting was indisputable. It is hardly too much to say that no species of firearm yet invented has proved so murderous as the old English long-bow; for the more deadly modern weapons of precision have become, the more has the formation of troops, been altered to minimise their deadliness; whilst the archer, it must be remembered, had dense masses of men before him, on which every shaft told.

The range and power of the English long-bow in its palmiest days were extraordinary. We have seen and handled one of these bows, said to have been used at Flodden. It measured six feet, unstrung, and the arrow three feet. The pull must have been quite one hundred pounds. To draw the cloth-yard shaft on such a bow would probably defy the powers of even an exceptionally strong man nowadays. But good Bishop Latimer, in his well-known eulogy of English archery, has shown us how from their boyhood Englishmen were scientifically trained in the use of the bow till, like Justice Shallow's hero, 'old Double,' they could 'clap in the clout at twelve-score yards.' Up to what distance the old long-bow was really effective is a question not easy to answer. But from the data we possess it may safely be assumed that against anything but armour of proof the cloth-yard shaft was deadly up to three hundred yards; whilst for combined rapidity and efficiency in shooting, no weapon could compare with the long-bow till the introduction of the breech-loader thirty years ago.

The ordinary military musket, even as late as Waterloo, was not comparable to the long-bow for accuracy and deadliness. It has been computed that a ton of lead was fired away for every man killed in the Napoleonic wars. The English yeoman could boast that for every shaft in his quiver he carried a foeman's life. But the slaughter wrought by the old musket, even in its primitive days, was greater in proportion to the number of men engaged than anything the breech-loader has achieved, because the formation of troops in line and column, with little or no attempt to take advantage of cover, gave the musket-bullet a fair chance of finding a billet, though it were a random one. Besides, in those days musketry fire was limited to short ranges, where it was safe to be effective. In estimating, however, the causes of the greater slaughter in the warfare of the past, it must always be borne in mind that the cold steel played a much more prominent part than it does now or is ever likely to do again. The sabre and bayonet did deadly work at close-quarters, and accounted for much of the carnage.

But let us illustrate our argument by figures. Take Marlborough's campaigns, and compare the losses with those of the Franco-German war, and it will be found that in proportion to the numbers engaged the former far exceed the latter. At Blenheim the opposing forces consisted of about 50,000 each. The French and Bavarians left

12,000 dead on the field, besides those who were drowned in the Danube, and the loss of the Allies was 12,500. That is to say, one out of every four men engaged was either killed or wounded. Now, the bloodiest battles of the Franco-German war were those fought around Metz, when the three armies of Von Steinmetz, Prince Frederick Charles, and the king closed upon Bazaine. At Vionville and Mars la Tour 17,000 Germans and about the same number of French were killed and wounded. But then upwards of half-a-million men were engaged on the two sides, and the slaughter, therefore, did not amount to one in ten. At Gravelotte, two days later, the fighting was still fiercer, and the German loss was officially stated as 19,799, while the French lost about 15,000. But here again the carnage was, in proportion, far less than at Blenheim, about one in nine, and not equal to that at Malplaquet, where 32,000 men were put *hors de combat* out of 240,000 engaged, or nearly one in every seven. And yet the mitrailleuses, the Chassepôts, the needle guns, and the breech-loading rifled artillery were fearful engines of death compared with the flint-locks and smooth-bores of Blenheim and Malplaquet.

But to take examples less remote from one another. Compare the slaughter in Napoleon's campaigns with the worst within living memory—with Gettysburg and Antietam in the American Civil War, with Königgrätz in the Austro-Prussian war, with Sedan and Metz in the Franco-German war. At Jena, in 1806, the Prussian loss was 21,000 out of a total of 105,000, and the French 19,000 out of a total of 90,000—that is to say, 40,000 casualties out of 195,000 engaged, or, roughly speaking, one in five. At Eylau, in 1807, the Russians lost 25,000 men out of 73,000; the French 30,000 out of 85,000—that is, for both sides, the appalling proportion of one in three! At Wagram, in 1809, the Austrian loss was 25,000 out of 100,000; the French 23,000 out of the same number. At Aspern, where Napoleon suffered his first defeat on the 21st and 22d of May 1809, the carnage was still greater, for the French lost 35,000 men out of 70,000—*one-half their number*—and the Austrians 20,000 out of 80,000. But even this awful butchery pales before that of Borodino in the Moscow campaign, for on that field the French left 50,000 dead and wounded out of 132,000 engaged, and the Russians 45,000 out of the same number—95,000 men slain or mutilated out of 264,000! It is awful to think of! And that bloody work was done in a single September day with the old flint-lock musket and smooth-bore cannon, aided by bayonet and sabre.

Now, the only battle in the latter half of the nineteenth century which can compare with Borodino in slaughter is that of Königgrätz, or Sadowa, in 1866, which ended the Austro-Prussian war. Out of 400,000 men engaged, 50,000 were killed or wounded—40,000 Austrians and 10,000 Prussians—one in eight only as against one in three.

The most sanguinary battle in the American Civil War was that of Antietam Creek, fought between McClellan and Lee on the 17th of September 1862, when, after repeated repulses, the Federals compelled the Confederates to retreat. Out of 100,000 men engaged, 26,469 were left on the field—the Federal loss being 12,469, and that of the Confederates 14,000; and that, re-

member, was before the era of breech-loaders. At Gettysburg the combined losses were 43,000; but the number of men engaged was nearly double, and the proportion, therefore, was not quite so great as at Antietam.

Take, again, Leipzig and Waterloo, and contrast them with Sadowa and Sedan. At Leipzig the French lost 60,000 men out of 160,000, and the Allies 42,000 out of 288,000—102,000 out of a total of 348,000—more than double the ratio of Sadowa. Then at Waterloo the losses of the Allies amounted to 22,976 out of 83,000, and those of the French to upwards of 30,000 out of 73,000—in other words, one man out of every three that fought that day was either killed or wounded. Now, at Sedan, under the awful crushing fire of the German guns, the French lost 30,000 out of 150,000 before they surrendered—a far smaller proportion than at Waterloo; while the Germans stated their losses at 3022 killed and 5909 wounded, out of the 250,000 brought into action.

These facts and figures seem to us to prove conclusively that war is no longer so murderous as it was. The alteration in tactics and in the formation of troops attacking has counteracted the superior precision and range of modern fire-arms. The shell, though its moral effect is greater, is not so destructive as the round-shot, grape, and canister of the old days playing upon troops advancing in line or column. The magazine-rifle, incalculably superior in accuracy and penetrating power to the old Brown Bess, is not so deadly in its effect; for, when it fails to kill outright, the wounds it inflicts with its tiny projectile are not nearly so ugly and crippling as those of the old spherical bullet, which smashed, where the other glances off. Indeed, experts take serious objection to the Lee-Metford, with which our troops are now supplied, on the ground that its bullet has no stopping-power unless it strike a vital part. Perhaps military scientists will some day recognise that stopping-power is more important in rifle-fire than range or penetration. Nothing is really gained by increasing the range-power of small-arms; it merely encourages the use of the rifle at greater distances; and long-range rifle-fire, as the Germans have always sensibly held, is mere waste of ammunition. The pounding at long range must be left to the artillery, and it is this arm, we believe, which will decide most battles in the future. That means that men will do their fighting at such respectful distances from one another that the slaughter of the battlefield will never again be as terrible as it used to be. The experience of Plevna will deter any general in the future from attempting to storm fortified positions held by troops armed with breech-loaders until the defenders have been thoroughly demoralised by artillery fire. And whenever it is necessary to come to close-quarters, the extended formation of attack; the rush from cover to cover; the short, quick dash in open order, followed by the sudden drop into a prone position, will neutralise the murderous fire of machine-guns and magazine-rifles. We have a shrewd suspicion, moreover, that the nerve of the soldier is not what it used to be, and that neither attack nor defence will be as resolutely and fiercely and desperately maintained as in days when men possessed less intelligence but more brute courage.

As to the war-balloons dropping explosives from the clouds, and the terrific dynamite gun said to have wrought such fabulous wonders in Cuba, these are bogies which we do not much believe in. In open battle, we are convinced that the soldier will run less risk of being killed or wounded than he ever did before, because every fresh engine of destruction will create the precaution necessary to neutralise its deadliness.

But with the sailor we admit it is different. One has only to read the sickening descriptions of the effects produced by the bursting of shells on board ship in the naval battle between the Chinese and Japanese at Yalu River to realise the appalling horrors of modern naval warfare. The ghastly scene after the explosion of a 300 lb. shell between decks must be enough to take the pluck and fight out of the bravest man. And then the awful, ceaseless din; the incessant hail of shells from the quick-firing guns; the inability to escape; the consciousness that one is cooped up in an iron box, which may at any moment go down to the bottom of the sea without an instant's warning; the want of air, the stifling gases, the impossibility of knowing what is really going on—these things must be a fearful trial of human nerves. Nelson's tars had nothing like this to face, and one contemplates the possibilities of the next great naval battle with a shudder. But it is perhaps just such an appalling object-lesson which is necessary to disgust the civilised world once and for all with war, by making plain to the least imaginative how revolting such hideous forms of slaughter are to every principle of humanity and civilisation.

THE NOBLE FIVE.

A TALE OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA GOLD MINES.

VII.

OF course Tom could not be expected to watch the cave for three days without any sleep, so I arranged with a friend of mine to relieve guard, also to keep my partner well supplied with victuals. The Colonel was to have a very low diet conducive to penitence and reflection.

Secondly, I required copies of the official record concerning Tom's claim, to show that he had conformed with all the requirements of the law.

Thirdly, for proof that, under pretext of lapse from neglect, the Colonel had 'relocated' the Noble Five, I stole his actual location notice, which was nailed to a tree on the claim.

Lastly, I found Tough Pardoe, who was ready to back me up in witnessing these facts.

But Tough Pardoe was something more than a witness. Prospectors, according to the missionary, are a bad lot, but I have noticed that the missionary is the first man to think ill of a woman's reputation, whereas a prospector is the very last. I might be Miss Surtees' escort in the camp, and no man would look crossways at her; but venturing into the outside world of gossips I needed Tough Pardoe as my chaperon.

I wonder if anybody remembers the *Lulie*, the

only Canadian canoe in all that country. Some Englishmen had brought her over by the Canadian Pacific, the same who wrote a book about her called *Three in B.C.* Tough Pardoe bought her afterwards in East Kootenay, and so she found her way to Kootenay Lake. Well, although Miss Surtees was a little nervous at first, she soon got accustomed to the crank dainty craft, as Tough Pardoe and I worked away with our paddles. South we headed from Ainsworth, then down the west arm of the lake to Nelson, where we slept that night. At dawn we were afloat again, running the first riffle, gliding down that big, swift Kootenay River, broad as the Rhine as it swept to and fro through the mountains.

We portaged the three cataracts, and slept that night at Sproat's Landing, where there was an hotel. But there is no need to give the details of our trip up the Columbia River and through the hundred miles of the Arrow Lakes.

On the fifth evening, while still the tremendous amphitheatre of the Selkirk Mountains shone in the full glory of sunset, we swept round the last back-water, Tough Pardoe singing a voyageur chant to the dip of the paddles. Ahead was the Canadian Pacific bridge; on our right the lights of the village shone through a violet dusk; then Tough finished his chant, and we heard a church bell ringing faint through the haze.

And so we backed in at the landing-place.

'Why, it must be Sunday,' said Miss Surtees, 'because there's Pete on the wharf-end fishing.'

'Pete!' she called.

'Yes, ma'am.' The loafer went on with his fishing.

'Is Mr Surtees back?'

'Came in just now,' he called, 'by the Pacific mail. He's got that Colonel along.'

'That what?'

'Colonel Hiram W. Giggleswick—that's what he calls himself, which is kinder high-falutin for a blamed scarecrow.'

Miss Surtees looked at me, and I at her, in amazement.

'How on earth has he beaten us?' she groaned.

'I think,' said I, 'we'd better not stop to argue.'

So we went, the three of us, leaving the canoe on the bank; and when we came to the house Miss Surtees walked straight in, we following.

Her brother met her in the hall, a stiff business man, bustling out of his office.

'Why, Rose,' he said indignantly, 'where on earth have you been?'

'Tell you afterwards, dear.' She breathed hard because of our running. 'Is that Colonel with you?'

'Yea.' The manager's face lighted up. 'He's just come overland from Kootenay; lived on what he could bring down with a shot-gun; turned up to meet the train I came by, starving, poor beggar, all in rags, really not fit to be seen. Who are these men you have with you?'

'Friends,' she cried. 'O Fred, am I too late? Has that wretched man?'

"The wretched man," as you call him, has brought me a piece of business which ought to make our fortunes. Now, Rose, you run away and change quick. I'll join you at supper. Then you shall explain this extraordinary conduct.'

'Let me pass!' she cried, as Surtees tried to detain her.

'But, my dear, this is most important business. You really must'—

'Fred, let me pass. You're making a fool of yourself. This man'—

'Impossible, Rose.'

But she had flashed past him into the office, calling on us to follow. So, despite all Surtees' protests, we found ourselves once more face to face with the enemy.

Certainly I never saw such a scarecrow. The Colonel's top hat was battered in like an accordion, his clothes were in ribbons, a week's growth of gray bristles stood out on his chin, his very nose had become white and haggard with hunger, while on the table beside him lay Tom's shotgun.

'Ah!'—he made a profound bow—'I think I have had the pleasure. Miss Innes!'

'I'm Miss Surtees. Moreover, I have come here to expose you as a swindler.'

Surtees came bustling: 'Really, you are going too far. This gentleman is my friend, and our guest.'

'Well, I'm your sister, and I decline to have this common thief thrust upon me as a guest.'

'My dear Rose, who thrusts him upon you?'

'I don't care,' said the lady defiantly.

'Neaon, I presoom'—the Colonel spoke with lofty condescension—that the lady's remarks are perfectly reasonable and polite. I'm sure we shall both be charmed to hear her comments upon my personal character. Anyhow, her British manners charm me right through to the bones.'

Miss Surtees was too angry even to speak.

'Wall, now, it appears,' said the Colonel blandly, 'that the lady is not disposed to explain. I calculate that a lady has always a perfect right to say what she pleases, or not to say what she pleases, or to say what she doesn't please. In the meantime'—he turned from her suavely and bent over the table where Surtees sat glaring ferociously at his sister—'you will oblige me, Squire, by drawing your pen through this document.' He dipped a pen in the ink and presented it. 'While your sister is pleased to describe me in your house as a—I think you said thief, madam?—yes, thief and swindler, I am not disposed to enter into relations of partnership. No, you bet your life!'

'Colonel,' said Surtees humbly, 'you see my position.'

'Squire, I sympathise; but I am adamant. Cancel that partnership!'

'No,' said Surtees; 'that would be a fresh insult to you. Colonel, I want to prove myself your friend. I believe you to be an honourable man. To testify my belief I shall sign'—

But he had scarcely brought his pen to the paper, when Miss Surtees, with a sudden swoop, laid hold of the document, which she tore into fragments and scattered.

'There, Fred, now you'll listen to me.'

'Excuse me,' said Surtees coldly. He touched an electric bell, which was answered by a clerk from his anteroom.

'Is the other copy complete?'

'In a minute, sir.'

The clerk retired.

'You shall listen to me,' said Miss Surtees. 'This man is a thief—a common sneak-thief, who is trying to sell you stolen goods.'

'And may I inquire'—the Colonel smiled politely—'if this lady makes a habit of witnessing signatures with such vehemence? Squire, I must now ask you also to explain why I am insulted in your home.'

'I must apologise, Colonel. Hitherto my sister and I have shared this house. To-night I shall go to the hotel until I can make other arrangements.'

'Your apology, Squire, is accepted.'

'Rose'—Mr Surtees looked up white with rage—'leave me, and take these men with you.'

The Colonel was busy at the end of the table whittling a pencil.

Miss Surtees turned to me for help.

'If I leave this room,' said I, 'it will be to get a warrant for your arrest as a receiver of stolen goods.'

'And who may you be?' Surtees levelled a single eyeglass. 'Get out of my house; and as to a warrant, this is Sunday. Moreover, I am the only magistrate within fifty miles.'

'Then, Mr Surtees, if you are a public servant, I demand your attendance, Sunday or no Sunday. I demand a warrant first for the arrest of this man on a charge of claim-jumping.' I produced my papers. 'I act on behalf of my partner, who has been robbed. Here I hold proof of my partner's property in the Noble Five claim. I bring my witness, Mr Pardoe, who will substantiate the facts on oath. And here I have a relocation notice under name of the American Eagle claim, bearing signature of Hiram W. Giggleswick, which I have taken in presence of witnesses from a tree on the Noble Five claim.'

The Colonel was still whittling, although his whole attention was concentrated upon me; but Surtees made me forget him altogether.

'Your name?' he asked.

'John Robinson.'

Surtees took up a Bible, and staring me hard in the eyes, said: 'Swear to that name!'

Miss Surtees tried to come to the rescue, but was ordered pretty sharply to be silent.

'Swear to that name!'

By this time I had recovered my scattered senses, and declined. 'My name does not bear upon this business.'

'Inquiries have been made through me by the friends of one bearing the assumed name of Jack Robinson. So you admit the name to be false?'

'I admit nothing.'

'A man who dare not use his true name,' said the magistrate, 'comes to me on Sunday, breaks into my house, and presents evidence which I know to be fraudulent, demanding the arrest on a false charge of a friend and employé of my own. If it is any satisfaction to you, Mr *alias* Jack Robinson, I don't mind telling you that Colonel Giggleswick has been for some months dealing with me in regard to a claim once known as the Noble Five. Colonel Giggleswick has produced complete official proof, backed by witnesses, of the actual lapse to the Crown Lands Department of this expired claim. Acting under my instructions, given to him in order that I might avoid any seeming injustice to the former proprietor,

Colonel Giggleswick has been to Kootenay offering money on my behalf for a quit-claim deed from the man who is known as Blind Tom, renouncing all pretence or interest whatsoever. Failing to buy such a deed, he acted under my instructions in relocating this claim in his own name as the American Eagle.' He called in the clerk. 'Have you finished that deed?'

'Here, sir.'

'Lay it before this gentleman.'

It was placed before the Colonel.

'Sign.'

The Colonel signed.

Then Surtees took the document and signed, despite a frantic protest from his sister. As usual, I had made a mess of the business.

'Are you aware, Mr Surtees,' said I, 'that you have rendered that document invalid by signing it on Sunday?'

'Mr *alias* Jack Robinson, you have already sufficiently aired your ignorance of the laws obtaining in this province.'

That made it all the worse.

'Here, you'—he nodded to Tough Pardoe, who was behind me—'will you witness this signature?'

'I'll see you hanged first.'

Mr Surtees turned to the man I had supposed to be his clerk: 'Constable, witness this signature.'

The policeman signed.

'Now, constable, these two men'—he pointed to us—'have forced their way into my private house. Expel them, and if they offer the slightest resistance arrest them. Rose'—he walked over to his sister—'I am at your service.'

'Stay with your friend the Colonel,' she said bitterly. 'I'm going to sleep at the hotel.'

'But I'm going to sleep there.'

'I don't care.' She turned to me. 'This gentleman will protect me.'

'This "gentleman," as you call him, will spend the night at the lock-up unless he takes care.'

'Put me in the next cell, then. This gentleman, as I call him, is my future husband.'

Now there was nothing in all the world which could please me better, but a pretty fix I was in if Miss Surtees called upon me for a husband's protection while I had fifteen cents in my pocket and no prospects on earth. However, that was my business, and I was not inclined to show the white feather before Surtees.

I offered my escort at once; but we had scarcely reached the door, when we were startled by a peremptory knock from the outside.

'Come in,' said Surtees, and in came our Kootenay policeman.

'Good evening, miss. Good evening, sir.' Then his eyes rested on the Colonel, and I heard him clanking a pair of handcuffs. 'Is this man your prisoner, Mr Surtees?'

'My prisoner? Of course not! This is some fresh conspiracy against me!'

'With your permission, sir, I have to arrest this man. Will you see the warrant, sir?'

At that moment I heard footsteps behind me.

'Well, partner,' came a familiar voice from the doorway; and turning round, I discovered my partner, very pale, his goggles cracked, his arm in a sling.

'What, Blind Tom!'

'Blind Tom—you're right, or I wouldn't have let him shoot me with my own gun.'

'Oh, Tom,' cried Miss Surtees, 'are you badly hurt?'

'Only my arm.' He patted the sling. 'A charge of my own special buckshot.'

'Attempted murder!' Surtees gasped like a fish, and we all turned to the Colonel.

'Wall neaon,' he extended his patronage to us all. 'Miss Surtees, do me the honour to accept as a wedding-gift from your most devoted admirer all my remaining interest in the greatest gold mine on earth. Surtees, my fatted duck, you're chivalrous, but I want something better for my partner. You ain't worth plucking, it's no amusement for me—I repudiate, and relinquish, and renounce. You air the champion idiot of the British possessions.'

'Look at him, ladies and gentlemen—to think I had that gaping sucker for partner when I might have made my deal with Miss Surtees. Look at him.'

Even while we looked, the Colonel had grabbed Tom's stolen shot-gun from the desk. There was a sharp report as he fired in the air, and in an instant down came the plaster ceiling on our heads.

The Ainsworth constable fired, the local policeman shouted, then the air cleared.

The Colonel had gone, bound for the United States—nor was he ever recaptured.

I am not Jack Robinson any more, because my wife prefers a name which she has raked up out of my past; an old respectable but slightly tarnished name with a handle to it. Blind Tom is Mister now, and business men wait in his ante-room kicking their heels for hours. Surtees stands chaff pretty well, but considers it bad taste if anybody asks after his friend, Colonel Giggleswick. As to the Noble Five, look at any daily paper. There you will see that the occasional line about Kootenay has become a paragraph, and is steadily growing into a column. As people talked in times past of Ophir and El Dorado, so they speak now concerning Westralia, Rhodesia, and British Columbia, the treasure houses of the British Empire. If, however, anybody wants to know more about the Noble Five let him ask his broker. A few shares are still to be picked up occasionally, if one keeps a sharp look-out. The brokers buy; but they buy, as a rule, for themselves.

CRAMMING.

THE title 'cramming' might bear a variety of meanings. It might refer to the artificial preparation of poultry, for instance, the fattening of the turkey or the harmless necessary chicken, with a view to their subsequent appearance at the dinner-table. We further gather from schoolboys that the word 'cramming' has an idiomatic meaning, being a synonym for prevarication or the deluding of others with purposely fictitious statements.

The present article proposes to deal with neither of these. The writer wishes simply to give a short account of the life of a crammer at a university. He is also generally known as a

'grinder' or a 'coach,' the careworn individual who impresses a given number of facts upon the mind of the undergraduate with sufficient force to stay there until after the date of his examination. The information acquired during the process is immaterial, it is needless to say, the examination being the final goal of the student's efforts. 'After that the deluge.' Any knowledge he may retain hereafter is to him a matter of the utmost indifference.

The cramming of a university student and the cramming of a fowl have, after all, a certain similarity. We may quote the time-honoured riddle—'Why are undergraduates like geese?' Every well-educated man knows the answer—'Because they are crammed, they are plucked, and when plucked, they are regularly sold.'

But this should not make us fall into the common mistake of thinking that cramming a student is necessarily to load his mind with an intolerable burden of learning. This is the general impression of fond mothers and relatives in general. We see its fallacy if we investigate the meaning of the word. Of its derivation etymologically we are ignorant, but it has acquired a technical meaning. To cram a man is nothing more than to tell him the special questions likely to be asked at the particular examination he is in for. This includes giving him the 'tips' known to be favourites of his examiners.

Thus we see that a man may be crammed and yet work only half-an-hour a day. The advantages of cramming are hard to see, except the doubtful one that it gives employment to crammers; but it is needless to criticise the system, as there will probably be crammers and cramming as long as examinations exist. But any one can see the disadvantages. A candidate who has been crammed may pass an examination which another may miss, though he has worked twice as hard and has twice the knowledge of his work. It is probably for this reason that all the Government examinations, till within the last few years, have been so deeply shrouded in mystery. No publication used to be made of the questions or the names of the examiners, and the competitors were not even allowed to take their papers out of the hall. Lately the old papers have been printed for circulation with the regulations in the examination for the Indian Civil Service and a few others. It is just as well that this is done, though it will inevitably lead to cramming. But in the old times the vagueness of the course often left it to chance whether a man read what he was examined in, no matter how hard he worked.

In speaking of crammers, we mean the private crammer. In Oxford the private 'coach' exists; but he is much less in evidence there than in other universities. There are reasons for this.

Oxford University appoints men of special qualifications to prepare students for their exa-

minations, and this to a great extent supplies the place of what would be called 'grinding' in other universities. This insures students getting a capable man to read with. It is a good thing in another respect. It spoils the market for private crammers, and prevents men who have done well in their college course from taking to cramming as a profession. Many a man whose means are small, and who has no professional training, is only too glad to earn the few guineas which may be very welcome at the moment. He takes pupils to keep the pot boiling till something else turns up, and then drifts into cramming for the rest of his life, and probably makes a salary only sufficient to keep him alive. If he is deprived of the hope of doing even this he is forced to look out for something that may prove much better in the end.

It must also be remembered that in Oxford the regular college lecturers have a much closer connection with the student than elsewhere, and do the work of a private tutor to a great extent. Hence the 'coach' for men going up for honours is almost unknown. Of course, those who will not read enough to get through the ordinary pass examinations will want crammers till the end of time, and always supply them with a moderate living.

The crammer's life is not an undisturbed bed of roses. He must have unbounded patience in face of the most appalling stupidity, and a capability for putting himself in the place of those he is teaching, and seeing facts with the same difficulty with which they see them. To 'coach' many hours a day he must have great endurance, for it is trying work.

A drawback to his life is its irregularity. At every university there are certain times of the year when all the examinations of the different classes come on together, and every one wants to be coached at the same time. During the month or six weeks of this crisis the crammer is reduced to a state approaching insanity, as he does not like to lose his connection by giving up his pupils, and yet has more work than he can possibly undertake. At another time he has not enough pupils to make him a decent living.

This uncertainty of his calling has another bad result. It leads him to overstate his income, unless he is very experienced; for this reason: At the busy season he makes a hundred pounds in a month or so, if he has luck. He multiplies this by twelve, and makes out his income to be twelve hundred a year. As a matter of fact, he will not possibly make more than £400 a year, what with vacations and other slack times.

This leads us to the profits of cramming. As we have said, £400 a year represents almost the maximum income of a good crammer. A good 'coach' and an indifferent one have almost the same charges, but the number of pupils the former can take at the same time for the same examination makes his profits much larger. 'Shure it's the quantity I sell makes it pay,' as the Irishman said who advertised whisky sold under cost-price. It is as little trouble to cram ten pupils together as one in some subjects. £500 a year might be made by a really first-class man with a good connection—and remember this would be only by the very hardest work.

We are speaking only of the private crammer.

Men who 'run' a cramming establishment—such as those for the Indian Civil Service in London and other well-known places—make the business pay well; but they simply organise a number of crammers in different subjects, and probably do no teaching whatever themselves. The head of a successful coaching staff will thus make a very large income compared with the private crammer; just as, for example, the editor of a magazine might derive enormous profits from it, and the contributors be plunged in the deepest indigence. But let us not enlarge on what is foreign to the subject in hand.

In these days of high-pressure competitive examinations a few parting words to those who may have to enter for them will not be out of place. We do not address the *jeunesse dorée* of the university, we need not say, who look upon reading of any kind as an unnecessary evil, unaccountably associated with getting their terms in college, and whose 'examinations seriously interfere with their cricket.'

The system of reading with a wet towel round one's head in the small hours has completely gone out of fashion, and never was in fashion with any one who knew anything about 'reading.' When a man gets as bad as that he will do his chances more good by going to bed.

Do not answer more than you are asked. An examiner has quite as much reading to do as he likes, and more, and to give him unnecessary work will only put him in a bad temper, a policy ruinous with examiners, who are as frail as ordinary mortals, only more so.

Do not answer questions which you are not asked. This might seem unnecessary advice to outsiders. The experience of those who have examined many papers proves it to be highly necessary. A friend of the writer's was correcting a paper in which a list of dates had been asked. The candidate gave a few (more or less correctly) and then added: 'Here it may not be amiss to mention the kings of Israel.' At the risk of making a digression we would relate another instance of the answering of misguided youth. A man had been up for an examination in Scripture, had failed utterly, and the relations between him and the examiner had become somewhat strained. The latter asked him if there were any text in the whole Bible he could quote. He pondered and then repeated: "And Judas went out and hanged himself."

'Is there any other verse you know in the whole Bible?' the examiner asked.

'Yes. "Go thou and do likewise."'

There was a solemn pause, and the proceedings are said to have terminated.

The reader might think the examiner's sense of humour would be touched by instances such as these, but they are so common he gets tired of them.

It may be said we have not given a very rosy picture of a crammer's life, but it would not be true to the facts to do so. Besides all that we have said, he has always the danger of losing touch with the rising generation of undergraduates, with whom it is almost as important to have common interests as to possess the best qualifications. Besides, examinations are constantly changing, and as a man gets older he fails to have the latest questions and the latest methods.

From all which we would give to those who are thinking of becoming crammers the advice which *Punch* gave to those about to get married—'Don't.'

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER XXII.—DE MORTUIS.

THE Home Secretary had never spent a more uncomfortable hour. His favourite daughter had stanchied her tears, and gone straight to the root of the very delicate matter at issue between them. Much as her tears had depressed him, however, Mr Sellwood preferred them to the subsequent attitude. It was too independent for his old-fashioned notions; yet it made him think all the more of Olivia. Indeed she was her father's child in argument—spirited and keen and fair. His point of view she took for granted, and proceeded to expound her own. Much that she said was unanswerable; a little made him fidget—for between the sexes there is no such shyness as that which a father finds in his heart towards his grown-up girls. But a certain bluntness of speech was not the least refreshing trait in Olivia's downright character; and decidedly this was not an occasion to be gilded over with synonyms for a spade. She wanted to know how the circumstances of the birth affected the value of the man; and so forth. Mr Sellwood replied as a man of the world, and detested his replies. But the worst was his guilty knowledge of Jack's flight. This made him detest himself; it made him lie; and it filled him with a relief greater than his surprise when voices came out of the darkness of the drive, and one of them was Jack's.

Olivia ran forward.

'At last! Oh, Jack, where *have* you been?'

Mr Sellwood never heard the answer; he was bristling at the touch of Dalrymple, who had led him aside.

'Entirely my doing,' explained the squatter; 'but I can justify it. I mean to do so at once. Am I right in understanding the bar sinister to be your only objection to our friend?'

'You may put it so,' said Mr Sellwood shortly.

'Then I shall have the pleasure of removing the objection: the bar doesn't exist!'

'Your grounds for thinking so, Mr Dalrymple?'

'I don't think; I know. And I'm here to prove what I know. Good heavens, do you suppose he was no more to me than one of my ordinary station hands? He was the son—at all events, the stepson—of one of my oldest friends.'

'The stepson! May I ask the name of your friend?'

'It is unnecessary. You have guessed it. I have a good deal to explain. Where can we go? I should like Lafont and Cripps to hear what I've got to say. Cripps especially—he will be able to check half my facts.'

'I think we ought all to hear them,' remarked Sellwood; 'we are all interested and concerned.'

'You mean the ladies? I would rather not; you can tell them afterwards; and as to the young lady, you may make your mind easy about her. If that was the only obstacle, I undertake to remove it. You can afford to trust her out of your sight.'

'I shall mind my own business,' snapped the Home Secretary; nevertheless, he led the way indoors with no more than a glance towards Olivia and her lover, who were still within hail; and five minutes later, as many gentlemen were empanelled in the billiard-room. Claude and Cripps and Mr Sellwood occupied the couches at one end; Francis Freke palpitated in a corner; and Dalrymple leant against the table, his legs crossed, his arms folded, a quiet smile upon his face. He was waiting for a clock over the chimney-piece to finish striking; the hour was eleven.

'Well, gentlemen,' he began, 'I shall not detain you many minutes. I have certain statements to make, and any proofs that you may want I shall be happy to supply to-morrow, or any time you like. Those statements will ignore, as far as possible, my own relations with the notorious Lord Maske. These I shall explain later, and you will then understand why I have hitherto held my peace concerning them. I have known all along that our friend outside—shall we call him John Dillamore?—was not and never could be the Duke of St Osmund's; and though Mr Cripps may look as black as his boots, he never consulted my opinion when he took John Dillamore away from my station, and it was no business of mine to interfere. Mr Cripps seemed sufficiently positive about the matter; and knowing what I know, I really don't blame Mr Cripps. But this by the way; I shall first confine myself to those incidents in the Marquis's career, of which, occurring as they did at the antipodes, and as long ago as the fifties, very little has hitherto been known here in England. And I repeat that I shall afterwards be prepared to prove every word I am about to say.'

'The Marquis of Maske landed in Melbourne in the early part of 1854. There for a time he cut a great dash, spent an enormous quantity of money, and indeed had soon reached the end of his resources. He then tried his luck on the Ballarat gold-fields, but his luck was out. At the diggings he sailed under an alias, and under an alias he drifted to Tasmania as early as July 1854. And at Hobart Town, as it was then called, he met the lady for whose sake he broke, though unwittingly, one of the criminal laws of his native land.'

'Now, I happen to know a good deal about that lady; but the more impersonally one enters into details of this kind the more chance has one of making such details perfectly clear to you. As it is you will find some little complications here

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and there. But I shall do my best to present them as intelligibly as possible; and if I fail, you will perhaps make a note of the point, and call my attention to it presently. The lady's name was Greenfield. Mrs Greenfield was a young widow with one male child; but not, as you might suppose, a young widow with money. And the Marquis married her at Hobart under peculiar, and really rather extenuating circumstances.

'Of course he had a wife all the time. You know all about that. It has leaked out through another channel—a channel I happen to have spent the last few hours in exploring. I have only just returned from the Lower Farm. I find the first wife died in 1860. But you may take my word for one thing: her husband had reason to believe she was already dead when he married for the second time in 1854.

'As a matter of fact, Eliza Hunt, as she was called, was actually at death's door in June of the latter year. On a day of which she was not expected to see the close, the late Duke wrote to his son (I happen to possess the letter, Mr Cripps), telling him, with perhaps a pardonable satisfaction, that the end was only a question of hours; and making certain overtures which I fear only excited Lord Maske's contempt and disdain. The Marquis did not profess to be a pious man; his father did. They had parted in anger, and in anger Maske tore up his father's letter; but I collected the fragments, and preserved them—and I shall justify that before I'm done. Maske tore the letter to little bits. But that very week he married again on the strength of it. And I needn't tell you there was trouble when the next mail came in! The woman was still alive; though still hopelessly—or rather hopefully—ill.

'So the couple in Tasmania lay low until their child was born—an event which proved fatal to the mother, and brought the Marquis up with a round turn, as the saying is. He was, as you may have heard, a very heartless man; but I happen to know that he was reasonably fond of his second wife, and reasonably grieved at her death. As a matter of fact, it drove him almost crazy at the time, and embittered him for the rest of his days. The point is, however, that he was thus left with two boys—a new-born weakling and an absolutely hardy child of two, the issue of its mother's first—and only legal—marriage. The weakling he registered as he would have done had the marriage been really valid; and, mark you, for all he knew it might be valid still. After that second letter, saying that the English wife was still hopelessly ill, he never heard again, either as to her recovery or her death, until some few years later. But the death might have occurred while the second letter was still on the sea, for it was only a month behind the first, and they took two months coming in those days. And this is a point worth noting,' said Dalrymple, uncrossing his arms, and for the first time making a gesture.

'It is a nice point,' conceded Mr Sellwood.

'In a nasty story!' cried the squatter, with his

sardonic laugh. 'No, not quite that; it's too strong a word. Still I am not here to whitewash the Marquis of Maske; indeed, the next feature of the case is wholly indefensible. You must know that all this time the exile nourished the most venomous feelings towards his family in general and the old Duke in particular. Unlovely as they were, however, I still think there was some excuse for such sentiments: the boy had been harshly treated; he was literally forced to desert his first wife; had they lived together, in England or elsewhere, not a penny-piece would have been theirs until the death of the Duke. Hence the silence of the Hunts—for the consideration you wot of. It wasn't the sort of arrangement that would have gone on very long had the woman lived, or left a child; but she died childless, as you know; and the Hunts' subsequent policy was obvious even to the Hunts. Nor was it the arrangement calculated to increase a young man's respect for his father; in the case of Maske it intensified contempt, and created the craving for revenge. I have heard him speak so often of that revenge! He would spring an Australian heir upon the family; that was his first, and, as you know, his very last idea. He even spoke of it, as I understand, in the letter that was pinned to the tree under which he was found dead in the bush! You see it was his dominant idea in life. But the heir he spoke of was not his son at all. And that's the indefensible feature of which I spoke.'

'If not his son, who was he, pray?' asked Cripps, with indignant incredulity; for his own reputation was in question here.

The squatter smiled. 'Can you ask? The elder of the two boys; the son of Mrs Greenfield by her first marriage,' he quietly replied.

'And what of his own son?'

'Dead.'

'You will find that difficult to prove!' cried the lawyer hotly.

'Yes? I think not; he died in Sydney, where the father migrated after the mother's death; he was dead within six months of his birth. You saw the certificate of the birth in Hobart, I believe?'

'Certainly I did.'

'Then here is that of the death; better keep it; you will have more use for it than I.'

And the squatter turned round, and rolled the red ball up and down the board, with his quiet sinister smile, while the men on the lounges examined the document he had put in the solicitor's hands.

'It looks all right,' said Cripps at length, in a tone that made Dalrymple laugh heartily as he faced about.

'It looks all right, eh? *That's* all right! Mr Cripps, your discernment—but excuse me! We are not here to bark and bite; we are here to clear up a mystery, at least I am. Is there any other point, gentlemen, which I can elucidate before we go any further?'

'I think there is one,' said Claude, speaking nervously. 'I have seen the last letter my uncle wrote, in which he spoke of an heir. I presume, in order to carry out the revenge you speak of, he called the living child by the dead child's name.'

'Exactly. He did it deliberately. I was coming to that.'

'But he seemed uncertain as to the living child's whereabouts. My point is this : where was the so-called heir at the time that last letter was written ?'

'Lost,' said Dalrymple, shutting his ugly lips as you shut a window. 'Lost in the bush, like Maske himself ; but the child's body was never found. The father had tattooed one of the eagles of his crest upon the little chap's chest—I am afraid, to further his deception. I was in all his secrets, as you see ; indeed, you may call me his accomplice without offending me ; and I'm bound to say I considered the tattooing a smart idea. However, a judgment was at hand. The child was lost for many years. And the rest is easily told ; it refers to me.'

The squatter looked at Mr Sellwood—not for the first time. As on the other occasions, however, he ran his eyes against an absolutely impassive, pink countenance.

'Mr Sellwood may remember my little anecdote of the iron store, the Queensland blacks, and the French eagle on the chest of the stray shearer who saved all our lives ?'

Mr Sellwood very slightly inclined his head.

'Well, that was the finding of the *soi-disant* Jack Dillamore. I knew all about him. For his father's sake I never lost sight of him again ; for his father's sake (and also because the idea appealed to me personally) I allowed my old chum's very reprehensible plan to come off, and our friend Mr Cripps to lay hold of my Happy Jack for the live Duke of St Osmund's : and for the sake of some fun for my pains I came home myself to see how matters were progressing. I'm bound to say I was disappointed. Happy Jack had grown tamer than I could have believed possible in the time. And hang me if the fellow wasn't in love ! My disgust was such that I was on the point of leaving the house this very afternoon, and leaving the suppositions Duke (whom it wasn't *my* business to depose) to marry and save the Upper House by the example of high morality he seemed certain to set ; but at the last moment I discovered his trouble. He was found out without my assistance ; he was cutting a worse figure than was in any way necessary ; and was about to lose, not only the title and emoluments he had enjoyed for some months, but the charming girl whom he had fairly won in love. That seemed a trifle too hard ! I determined to speak out. I have done so : and I am prepared to prove every word I have said. The certificate now in your pocket, Mr Cripps, was not the only one I had in mine. At the moment, however, there's no more to be said—except a few words with reference to Jack Greenfield's future. He has suffered enough. I have been, if not at the bottom of it, at all events to blame in the matter. I have a little, inadequate scheme of reparation, which I shall submit to you, gentlemen, in order that you may use your influence with Jack, if necessary. The point is that I am never going back to Australia any more. I was born and brought up in the old country, and I've got the taste for it again during the few days I've been home. Indeed, I had never lost the taste ; but I don't intend to run the risk any more. I am lucky enough to own one of the crack sheep-stations of New South Wales. I shall want a permanent manager in my absence. I needn't tell you who is the

very man for *that* billet. Jack Greenfield—if he'll take it !'

'A good house ?' said Mr Sellwood casually.

'Excellent ; one of the best homesteads in the Riverina.'

Mr Sellwood said no more. His mind was made up : better lose his daughter than have her break her heart. He could not forget the earlier experiences of the evening. The surprises of this hour were enchanting compared with the embarrassments of the last. Then he had no reason to doubt Dalrymple's word as to Jack's actual antecedents ; where he doubted it, was in another matter altogether. At this point in his reflections, however, and with the inevitable discussion of the immaterial points still raging around him, Mr Sellwood was brought to his feet by the violent opening of the billiard-room door and an agitated apparition of his wife upon the threshold. Something was the matter : had the lovers eloped ? No ; with Mary Freke they were at the heels of Lady Caroline, who came the length of the room at something ludicrously like a run—her very fringe awry, and a horrified glance shooting from the corner of each eye at the nonchalant well-preserved figure of Dalrymple the squatter.

'Do you know what they are saying downstairs ?' cried her Ladyship, looking as far as was possible at everybody at once. 'Matthew Hunt is here, and do you know what he is saying ? That neither Jack nor Claude is the Duke of St Osmund's, but you—you—you !' And she turned like a podgy tigress upon none other than the squatter himself.

'I could have told him that,' remarked Mr Sellwood, calmly ; he had arrived at the conclusion exactly ten seconds before.

'I shall tell him something he doesn't bargain for—the born idiot !' added the squatter *sotto voce*.

'Then you believe it ?' cried Lady Caroline to her husband. 'You must be mad !'

'Your Ladyship is so right ; it would indeed be madness to dream of entertaining so preposterous a notion !' cried Mr Cripps, who was literally dancing with disbelief. 'Even Mr Dalrymple will hardly go as far as that. He has gone farther already than the law will follow him ; we'll do him the justice to hold him irresponsible for this absurd report ! He knows as well as we do that the Marquis of Maske was found dead in the bush ; of that we have absolute proof. Even if we hadn't, who has recognised him ? Has he one single witness to his identity ? If so, let him be called !'

'The gentleman is excited,' remarked Dalrymple, ringing the bell. 'Does it really not occur to him that I might have *found myself* dead in the bush, and authenticated my own death by very obvious methods ? Is it inconceivable that a young man with my then reputation should jump at the chance of dying on paper—if you will permit the expression ? Such a death offers unusual advantages, a second birth among others. However, I never meant to be born again, least of all in this rather melodramatic manner ; but I couldn't resist coming home to see the fun, and it serves me right to have to stop and pay the score. Witnesses ? I had certainly no intention of calling any to-night ; but now that my hand has been forced it can't

be helped. The elder Hunt is one; knew me at sight; and here comes Stebbings for another. Shut the door behind you, Stebbings, and answer a couple of questions. It's generally supposed that you were drunk yesterday when I arrived. Were you, or were you not?

'I was not, your Grace.'

"Your Grace," you see! repeated the squatter. 'I'm afraid that was premature, Stebbings! However, if you were not drunk, and you certainly conveyed that impression, what was the matter with you?'

'Nervousness!' cried Stebbings, who was sufficiently nervous now. 'I had seen the dead! I had recognised your Grace!'

'Exactly; and I swore at you as a blind, to explain the complete state of collapse that you were in. That's all, Stebbings; you may go. Jack, I see your face! You wonder you didn't spot it at the time? Stebbings backed me up, or else you would have done; for my part, I confess I was more frightened when you found us talking together in my room, when I was packing. I assure you all, I meant to clear out then; believe it or not, it's the case. In spite of what I said just now, I'm not so wedded to an English life as I fancied Jack was; and I had no idea at the time that his position was at all insecure. Yes, my boy, you were welcome to the whole thing! I was going back to the bush'—

'You were going back!' cried Jack, coming forward; and Olivia came also, flushed with a joy that rendered her uniquely indifferent to the great disclosure. Jack was hers. What odds if the world should 'end to-night?'

'To be sure I was; but now I think it will have to be you, after all. What do you say to managing Carara? What do you say, Miss Sellwood, to helping him to try? You must talk to your father about it. And for heaven's sake, Jack, don't thank me; I've been the worst friend you ever had in your life.'

Mr Sellwood was already speaking to his wife. Jack and their daughter were close beside them. The new Duke turned his back and joined Claude on his lounge. The solicitor had beaten a retreat; the Frekes had done so before him; and the rest of their party, including Jack, did so now. But Jack returned before either Claude or the squatter had left the room.

'The worst friend I ever had!' said he reproachfully, as he took his old master's hand. 'What should I be doing to-night if it hadn't been for you? You may say what you like; you've helped to make me the happiest man in all the world. I can marry her after all! Even Lady Caroline has just given me her blessing! But you'—and he laid an affectionate rough hand on Claude's shoulder—'dear old man, what can I say to you? I'm ashamed to look you in the face. You've lost everything!'

Claude was very pale; the other's honest eyes were shining with sympathy beneath their bushy brows; but the new Duke laughed aloud.

'Lost everything?' he cried. 'Not a bit of it! I'm not going to live for ever; and Claude's exactly where he was—the next man in. You think not? And have you known me all these years, and do you really and truly expect me to marry again? Jack—my boy—have I to tell you how it is with me? I have been a bad old

lot in my time; but one woman I once loved well enough to spoil me for ever for all the rest.'

He paused an instant, and it was quite a tender hand he laid on Jack's shoulder.

'And there's one man I love for her sake!'

THE END.

A PILGRIMAGE TO VAUCLUSE.

By CHARLES EDWARDS.

I SHOULD have liked to visit the place of Petrarch's retirement and literary activity under conditions that might be called poetic, but Nature decided otherwise. The weather had, they told me in Avignon, been enchanting for days past. According to precedent, I ought to have had faith in it for the morrow, which I had devoted to Vaucluse. But it was a day of downright mistral, with rain in close heavy lines pouring from dark joined masses of cloud. It was so abominable in short that the gentle girl in the hotel of L'Isle-sur-Sorgue and her mother, who owned the hotel, insisted that I was to have a coupé instead of the omnibus which was wont to ply over the six or seven kilometres of ground between L'Isle and Vaucluse after the arrival of trains at the former place.

'It will be easier for the horse, and more commodious for Monsieur,' the gentle girl murmured, and her mother quite acquiesced. And while she spoke the mistral howled outside and bent almost double such of the cypress trees as stood in the way of that particular gust. It was not at all a day in keeping with the melodious words of praise with which Petrarch has sanctified the district. But through the tempestuous hubbub the Sorgue swirled prettily on its way by the street side in L'Isle, as dark blue as a peacock's feather. A hundred years or so ago that observant traveller, Young, wrote in 'bright terms of this little town. 'I walked,' he says, 'on the banks of this classic stream for an hour, with the moon gazing on the waters that will run for ever in mellifluous poetry.' But one may be pardoned for associating with this paragraph another almost coeval with it, in which the writer mentions the trout and crawfish they gave him at the L'Isle inn as 'the most exquisite in the world.' Under the emotional influence of moonlight and such a supper, who on such a spot would not be capable of some delicious moments?

My coupé was a melancholy wreck. I judge it had served a medical man for a multitude of rough seasons, but had at length been abandoned with all its weather-scars picturesque upon it. The mistral blew out the bannerets of its ruin as we clanked along the muddy white road—strips of window lining and bits of straps which had long survived all practical purposes. The infrequent rustics whom we passed stared at us as if we were something akin to the Flying Dutchman of the southern seas. Its horse, like itself, was an angular creation on the verge of ruin.

But broken down as we were, we passed the rival omnibus. In places like L'Isle there is always a rival omnibus. The two hotels in the little town each make a respectable number of francs per annum out of Petrarch's reputation.

You must ordinarily choose your conveyance either from the Hôtel St Martin or the Hôtel Petrarch and Laura. Under the influence of such a competitive strain the public may make the journey to and from Vaucluse for but fifteen pence. For an eight or nine mile drive that seems triumphant.

But, of course, a coupé was another matter. So the driver seemed to think as he urged his horse to get beyond the yellow omnibus in front. The yellow omnibus carried no passenger, but the painted word 'Dépêches' on it told of its postal responsibilities.

And so the two men exchanged looks and the coupé led the way; and every camel-like step of my bony horse brought me nearer to the line of hills seen dimly through the down-pour, which hills were to break asunder somewhere to let us into the glen that Petrarch found so wholesome a place of sojourn for his muse's sake. The mistral continued to rage across the rain-blurred landscape. I could observe here and there pallid country houses and the straw-coloured reeds by the roadside ten and twelve feet high, which contrasted so well with the ruddy tinge of the willows bordering the Sorgue and its meadows. Most noticeable, however, were the sturdy plane trees, with the amber plaques on their shapely trunks well brought out by the wet. Then there were cypresses in avenues, planted to shelter from the mistral on such a day as this. It was like driving to one's own funeral between these solemn, pointed effigies of woe, all curveting before the tempest. Save these sights, and an occasional large-footed woman with her head in a shawl and her thick arm bearing a weighty basket of I know not what, there was little to see, until we came to the opening in the hills.

Here a white aqueduct stretched from edge to edge, and my coupé passed under the aqueduct. Here, too, was a mill—"the mill of the aqueduct"—with an inscription in large letters on its wall, telling how it was kept by —, who charged only five per cent. It needed a little exercise of the intelligence to catch the meaning of this five per cent. I suppose, however, that a miller may do pretty well for himself at five per cent. on the grain he grinds into flour, especially if, like this miller of the aqueduct, he gets all his grinding power from a classic stream like the Sorgue—for nothing.

The vague hill mass now resolved itself into three tiers of ridges, each stony, and the lower two studded with the dark-green pines one so soon gets to love in the hot south, as much for their cool shadows as for their soothing colour. Olive trees also declared themselves, though these were stunted as if they at any rate found the mistral a foe to proper development.

From the aqueduct gully we passed immediately into the lower part of the gorge of the Sorgue, which at its extremity forms the *cul de sac* known as Vaucluse, or 'Vallis Clausa.' A valley, strictly speaking, Vaucluse is not. You must return from it by the way you approach it, unless you prefer to tackle the cliffs some six or seven hundred feet in vertical height which bind its eastern side.

Then one by one houses stole into view, and the Sorgue was seen fretted with snowy foam by constant mills. A prettier stream than the Sorgue cannot be imagined. Whether seen in the blue pool of its source, in the bowels of the rocks, or in its cascades from the hill towards the mouth of the glen, or in its pellucid green reaches between its different cascades, it is quite an ideal river.

But the mills certainly do their best to detract from its fame and sully its purity. I was out of humour with them long ere my coupé splashed into the little market-place of the village, with a clatter of wheels that drew a score of eyes upon us from as many windows. One may wonder what Petrarch would think of the transformation of his ancient retreat.

My driver halted outside the Hôtel Laura, and signified that the remainder of my pilgrimage must be performed afoot. His horse, agile though it was, could not clamber up the rough path that led to the fountain. The animal, the coupé, and the man would await me under the shelter of the fine plane trees which dignified the little village, though, on the other hand, he hinted (and I agreed with him) that no harm would be done if he retired to the Hôtel Laura, and the steed withdrew to steam in secret in the Hôtel Laura's stables.

Not a soul showed here in the open in the pouring rain. Small wonder. But in a butcher's shed, by the way, was a gathering of Vaucluse's citizens. The butcher had just killed a sheep, and the animal's joints were being disposed of. Butcher and citizens alike looked aside from the sheep at the visitor as I passed them by.

They are used to strangers in Vaucluse. It was easy guessing that if I had not already known as much. Was not the first house upon which I set eyes styled the Café Petrarch and Laura even as the hotel bore the name of the poet's immortal charmer? The café wall was decorated with drawings of billiard cues and balls, as well as intimations about the beer to be obtained within, and the significant inscription: 'Here Petrarch composed his 129th sonnet.' In fact, the café stood (or believed that it stood) on the spot that had served as the poet's 'cabinet d'étude.'

'Sweet country, pure stream,'

Petrarch writes in this particular sonnet; and in spite of everything, and the flight of five and a half centuries of time, the Sorgue is still worthy of his praise.

It was as a schoolboy at Carpentras, a few miles away, that Petrarch first became smitten with affection for Vaucluse. 'Here is a spot that suits me wonderfully,' he then said of it. 'Were I master of this place, I should prefer it to the finest cities.' The years passed, and eventually he came into retreat among the white and ruddy rocks, ivy decked, and with the Sorgue babbling eternally in the glen. He had divers mundane disappointments to cope with, and chief of all his strange holy love for the young girl who lived in ignorance of him.

'Here I make war upon my senses,' he writes as a mature man. 'I keep silence from morn to night. There is no one to converse with, for people constantly employed either in spread-

ing their nets or taking care of their vines and orchards have no knowledge of the intercourses of the world, or the conversations of society. . . . My whole household consists of a dog and my old fisherman. His cottage is contiguous to mine. When I want him I call; when I no longer want him he returns to his own cottage. Figs, raisins, nuts, and almonds—these are my delicacies. I am fond of the fish with which this river abounds.'

But the poet could not exorcise himself from the sweet chains Laura had set upon him. 'Thrice in that dark and lonely hour when none but ghostly shades are seen or heard, Laura, with steadfast looks, approached my bed and claimed her slave.'

A year's communion with Dame Nature in Vaulcuse was enough for Petrarch. By then he had at any rate learned that under changed skies the mind, with all its graces and all its fears, remains the same.

I climbed past the houses towards the base of the scarred precipice in front of me. The Sorgue chattered by my side. Oh, these mills! How execrable they seemed! The lowest depths of their abomination seemed fathomed when I had to pass a score or more of huge bales of foul rags littering the roadway, and hold my nose against the stench the humid air had drawn from them. Fragments of the filthy refuse draped the rocks hard by, and the wind had carried other fragments on to the higher brambles and scrub of the mountain. And this, if tradition is to be credited (rather than the Café Petrarch and Laura), is just where Petrarch had his dwelling. The paper mill, not quite inaptly, stands on the spot in which the poet originated so much consumption of paper.

High above the mills and the river, on the rocks over the left bank of the Sorgue, stand the ruins of a castle. Here lived the Bishop of Cavaillon, with whom Petrarch had friendly intercourse. It is now a desolate shell of a château, finely situated for the jackdaws and for the mistral to shriek through its broken halls.

From the chief mill (with its electric lamps and modern machinery) to the source of the river the ascent is continuous and abrupt. Yet, lining the river banks almost to the fountain itself, are arbour'd seats and bijou cafés and beer gardens one after another with seductive sign-boards; all of them, like the rocks themselves, scrawled with the names of the tens of thousands who during the last few decades have come to Vaulcuse. I never saw such a maze of initialling. The walls are marked in letters a foot in length, and the very boulders in the river bed near the source (they are only covered after heavy rains) have been chiselled deep, so that at fifty paces distance a man might teach the alphabet from them alone. If it were worth while, I could have groaned over this barbarous disfigurement. But one comes after a while to expect this sort of thing in such a place as Vaulcuse; though it did seem needlessly incongruous to behold here by the Sorgue's bank a chalet inscribed, 'Panorama of the wonders of the world.'

From one shed a native woman pursued me to vend photographs and large yellow books of

verses written by enthusiastic sons of Provence on the theme first conceived by Petrarch. Vaulcuse wants no such commentaries; nor does Petrarch. Though the rain was still merciless, I could gaze up the sheer face of the rock in admiration of the sequestered nook, and watch the dwindling stream by my side. Thus strolling I suddenly missed the Sorgue altogether. A few threads of water filtered from above. That was all. The rest had sunk below the upper boulders.

But the secret was soon declared. Hence I scrambled to the cavern under the brow of the precipice, with its area of pale blue untroubled water fed unceasingly from the rocks that shadowed it. This was the peaceful pool that Petrarch saw and admired. Here were the 'clear, cool and sweet waters' as he saw them—as immaculate, mills notwithstanding farther down, in 1894 as in 1338, and as good to see now as then. Hence, underground, some 20,000 gallons of water per second sought the open air and an adventurous career as a river. This was the source of the Sorgue.

I took my fill of the scene, and shall not soon forget it: the beetling cliffs, the pinnacles of limestone, bramble-draped as to their base, the ruined castle of the bishop, the little red chapel to 'Our Lady of Hope,' the blue silent pool, and the white fretful stream that is born of it. Petrarch's phantom shape and genius were scarcely requisite to make the memory indelible.

And afterwards I returned, still in the tireless rain, to my damp coupé in the middle of the village. I drank coffee in the Grand Hôtel Petrarch and Laura, and stared outside at the name of the 'Maison Laura' with its notice 'plats du jour.' There was also an assuming mansion to notice bearing the words 'Here in 1874 was held the literary assize in honour of Petrarch.' The Vaulcuse school children in blue frocks were returning home by the blue and white river when the coupé began to creak stiffly back to L'Isle-sur-Sorgue.

LINES FROM THE PAST.

A FEW lines, written in a long-lost book:

'With love, from Jack;' and swift my soul takes wings

To a fair scene, where summer-gladdened springs
Make murmurous answer to the brawling brook:

I sit once more within an arbour'd nook,

While high in air the tireless sky-lark sings;

To a strong hand my own responsive clings;

Heart beats to heart, and eyes give look for look.

Alas for summer dreams! Stern Winter's feet

Are pressing now on Autumn's lagging heels.

Brown leaves—like dead hopes—idly float up-
stream;

The ink is faded—I wake from a dream;

Wake to a present whose pain naught conceals—

Nor will—till we in God's own Springtide meet.

ELSIE HARRINGTON.

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OUR MEDITERRANEAN FLEET.

BY A NAVAL OFFICER.

WHEN the often-discussed next great naval war breaks out, in all probability the first battle will be fought in the Mediterranean; and as three of the four principal naval powers—namely, England, France, and Italy—have all extremely powerful fleets there, and the Russians have one close by in the Black Sea, the result of the battle might decide the struggle by effecting the destruction of the flower of the navy of the weaker side. The British Mediterranean fleet may therefore, by no great stretch of imagination, be considered to hold in trust the fate of the empire; and, taking this into consideration, a description of this fleet, of which we have just cause to be proud, by one who has served in it for nearly four years, may be interesting.

From the above remarks it will appear obvious that it is highly important that our Mediterranean fleet should be very strong; and so it undoubtedly is—not only the strongest, but also the most modern, most efficient, and best-drilled permanent sea-going squadron in the world. Its strength is ten battle-ships, ten fast cruisers, four fast torpedo-gunboats, four torpedo-boat destroyers, and twenty torpedo-boats. All these ships are modern fighting ships; there are besides a torpedo dépôt ship and a torpedo ram, two coast defence ships for the protection of Malta and Gibraltar, a despatch-vessel, four old gunboats, a dépôt ship at Malta, a store-ship, and a sailing vessel for training young seamen; in fact, a navy complete in itself. At its headquarters—Malta—is a first-class dockyard containing four docks, while at Gibraltar is a smaller dockyard which is rapidly being developed, and where three large docks are in course of construction. Gibraltar is popularly supposed to be the most impregnable fortress in the world; Valetta, the capital of Malta, certainly runs it close, and possesses besides the finest harbour, for its size, in Europe. The ships are manned by 11,000 officers and men, commanded

by a commander-in-chief and another admiral afloat, and a third admiral in charge of Malta dockyard. All the vessels of the 'fighting fleet' enumerated above can steam sixteen knots or more, and consequently they have nothing to fear from any possible opponents, very few of whose battle-ships are so fast; if outnumbered by a combination of enemies—an unlikely event—they could refuse action by steaming away until reinforcements arrived from home. The French permanent fleet is by no means so strong as ours; it numbers only eight battle-ships, eight cruisers, and four gunboats, and it very seldom leaves home waters, while our ships all spend nine months of the year cruising.

What are the duties and objects of this large fleet? Not, as is the rule with our foreign squadrons, to protect colonies; we have none there. Malta and Gibraltar are strongly garrisoned and able to take care of themselves; Cyprus certainly does not require such inordinate protection. Its duty is to support our prestige and commerce. As regards the latter, it is true that in war-time the greater part of it would be diverted to the Cape route, the Suez Canal being so easily blocked; but there would still remain a great number of ships trading to Mediterranean ports; and if we do not want to see them totally excluded from the great inland sea, the existence of a powerful fleet is necessitated by the great strength of foreign nations. Moreover, withdrawal from the Mediterranean would be a serious blow to the prestige of a power which has claimed predominance there as everywhere at sea for at least a hundred years; and would leave the field open for the concentration of any number of possible hostile allies, who should never be able to join forces with our fleet between them. The advocates of abandonment argue that we run the risk of total defeat; but it is now generally thought that our ships are too fast and too numerous to render this possible. The squadron is also indispensable in peace-time as the great training school for officers and men in all modern drills and exercises.

All the battle-ships and big cruisers carry out much the same yearly routine. Three months—from May to July—cruising with the commander-in-chief to the westward of Malta or with the other admiral in the east; three months cruising, in company with the whole fleet, in the Levant or elsewhere, in the autumn; three months spent in the Levant with the torpedo dépôt ship *Vulcan*, and otherwise engaged; and the remainder of the year at Malta, relitting. The *Vulcan* is a ship of the size of a first-class cruiser, with fewer guns, but fitted up as a floating torpedo factory, and carrying half-a-dozen second-class torpedo-boats, with which sham night-attacks are made on the fleet every now and then. A permanent squadron is maintained in Greek waters, commanded by a rear-admiral, ready for any eventuality of the eastern question; it consists of four or five battle-ships and half as many cruisers; and when it is joined in August by the commander-in-chief, between twenty and thirty ships are assembled to cruise together, and carry out steam tactics and other evolutions. There are also ships stationed at Gibraltar, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Port Said, and in the Red Sea and the Danube.

Both in harbour and at sea there are frequent drills and exercises which create great rivalry between the different vessels—each striving to be the smartest in the squadron: the rivalry is as keenly exhibited in coaling ship as in a boat-race. At Malta there are gunnery, torpedo, and signalling classes, and the seamen and marines are landed in force once a week for battalion drill. Every quarter a regulated amount of ammunition is expended from every gun, and a full-speed trial is gone through—this sometimes takes the form of a race from port to port; and at sea the captains and executive officers are almost daily given opportunities of manœuvring their ships at steam tactics with the fleet. Certainly in no other fleet in the world is there such a diversity and frequency of drills, in which every one takes an interest both from motives of professional zeal and *esprit de corps* for his particular ship.

The officers and men have ample facilities for sport and play: there are a great many forms of amusement. Apart from the usual visits to places of interest, ruined towns, and such like stereotyped forms, are the annual regatta and athletic sports, and individual boat-races, cricket, football, &c. 'Regatta week' is the great annual merry-making of the squadron: it takes place in the Levant, in which there are several magnificent harbours, when the whole fleet is assembled. Two days are devoted to sailing-races and two or three to pulling; there are two cups to be competed for—one given by the Duke of Edinburgh when he was the admiral, and one given every year by the commander-in-chief; besides money-prizes given by the officers for the winners of races between boats of every description, from the heavy launch or pinnace to the skiff and Maltese bumboat or even the raft for painting the ship's side. Regatta week is observed as a general holiday; only necessary work is done; and probably every evening there is a concert on board one of the ships. The battle-ship *Trafalgar* gives a special annual concert on 'Trafalgar night'—October 21st—which is always a great success. This ship has an unusually large quarter-deck,

which, roofed in and surrounded with awnings tapestried with brilliantly-coloured flags, makes an ideal concert-room. The deck in front of the stage is covered with little café tables and chairs and arm-chairs for the admirals and captains; officers of every ship are invited to give their assistance, and the result is a selection of no mean talent—singers, conjurors, instrumentalists, reciters, and sketchists; of course there is a topical song. Cricket and football matches call for no special description. Enough has been said to show that the man who serves a three years' commission 'up the Straits,' although debarred from the joys of home, can look back to the experience with feelings of pleasure when he has arrived in England to spend a year or two on the home station; and feel sure that he has gained a thorough knowledge of his particular duty in a modern ship, which will perhaps later on stand him in good stead when the time comes to fight the battle destined to settle once for all the question of the sovereignty of the seas.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER VI.

EVENTS in Russia followed one another during the fatal 1855 with breathless rapidity. Nicholas—the finest man in Europe, and the haughtiest—died broken-hearted; Sebastopol succumbed; Alexander II. came to the throne, and with his coming people breathed more freely; for the late majestic Imperial Personage had sat like a millstone on the hearts of men, an absolute autocrat if ever there was one, by sheer weight of an awe-inspiring personality.

Sasha Philipof had been ordered to return to the Crimea, where he took part in the defence of Sebastopol and was wounded a second time; but Dostoief, attached to the person of the Grand Duke Tsarevitch, now Tsar, had found his duties to lie nearer home, and was, in fact, never very far from his imperial master and friend, who, as a matter of fact, had grown extremely fond of the young hussar.

Olga was still a convalescent when Philipof, to his great joy, received his orders to return to the seat of war. Dostoief had of late become a somewhat frequent visitor to Olga's flat, and a more loverlike lover than Sasha might have regarded these visits of the handsome hussar with suspicion if not apprehension; but that martial young person never dreamed of associating Dostoief's presence in Olga's house with any idea of dawning love. He welcomed his friend whether at his ward's house or at his own, and considered it a friendly act that he should visit either one or the other.

More than this, when ordered to the Crimea, he actually begged the hussar, as a favour to himself, to look up his betrothed occasionally, and see that she wanted for nothing during his absence.

'Be a brother to her, Dostoief, like a good fellow,' he said, 'for my sake; I can trust you, I know.' Dostoief glanced keenly at his friend and winced a little at the last sentence, but he promised to visit Olga periodically.

'I am her guardian, you know,' continued Sasha, 'and we are first cousins as well, not to mention the trilling circumstance that we have

been engaged for years; so that I have some right to appoint a deputy guardian!'

From which it is to be inferred that, however excellent an officer Alexander Philipof may have been, he was a poor specimen of a man of the world; while as a lover he was a most foolish and contemptible person indeed!

As for Olga, she bewailed Sasha's departure after the most approved Russian manner, with many tears and much demonstration; and if she had been asked her opinion as to his sanity in leaving her in charge of Dostoief, she would have contemptuously declared that to doubt it would be an insult both to her love and to Sasha's also; or perhaps she might have quoted, if she had known it, the gospel of the lover according to Montrose, in the lines beginning:

He either fears his fate too much
Or his deserts are small. . . .

However, there arose no such question, for she absolutely and entirely trusted herself and him also; and assuredly her devotion to Philipof was a very complete and beautiful thing. As for his, though a less perfect article, it was of a good durable quality as far as it went—though, of course, for Sasha, military duty and excitement, and possible glory, took the first place, and love a bad second.

Sasha was to write, of course, from the Crimen, and Olga would write also, and probably very much oftener; and Philipof did his best to feel and to appear decently miserable when he bade Olga farewell and departed; but as a matter of fact he was overjoyed to exchange the constant sofa-side attention of the last month for the bracing life of the camp and the battlefield. He was weary to death of sick-nursing, and required a change.

As for Dostoief, he entered upon his duties as vice-guardian to pretty Olga with the most honourable intentions, both towards his friend and towards his ward; and being more than half in love when Sasha departed for the south, he promptly completed his self-enslavement as soon as his friend's back was turned; though, to do him justice, he did not avow his love, and even concealed it from its object.

Sasha wrote a letter or two, and was then so severely wounded that he was picked up for dead, and was, indeed, for a month or more, poised balance-like between life and death. On recovery, or partial recovery, he requested a fellow-officer to write in his name to Olga; but unfortunately this letter never reached its destination, because the bearer of the mail of which it formed a part was shot. After this it was difficult or impossible to send further communications home from beleaguered Sebastopol, neither could Sasha receive news from St Petersburg; so that when, Sebastopol having fallen, he returned home, depressed by a year's disaster to Russia's arms, he came to St Petersburg as one who has twelve months' news to hear.

One item of news he received *en route*, however, and this was not of a kind to cheer a poor soldier, war-worn and disheartened by the failure of his country's arms. Nicholas was dead; but his displeasure with the unfortunate Okhotsk regiment lived in his successor, who, it appeared, was bent upon honouring his dead father's

known sentiments in this matter by inheriting and continuing his animosity towards the corps. Consequently, though there were, heaven knows, vacancies enough in the regiment, the fiat went out that there should be no promotion, and that the regiment should be thus branded, with others named, as 'under degradation.'

Poor Sasha, who had certainly done his best, both at Inkermann and elsewhere, to preserve the honour of the regiment, deeply resented this undeserved disgrace; wholesale degradation was, he felt, most unjust and improper. This was not the way to increase in those who had well served the Tsar a feeling of loyalty towards his person. Was it right that he, who had fought for nearly two years in his country's defence, and had been twice within the valley of the shadow of death, should now be obliged to enter St Petersburg at last like a dog that has done wrong and slinks home with its tail between its legs?

All this was so deeply mortifying to Philipof that he had not the heart even to visit Olga for the first twenty-four hours after his arrival. He was ashamed to appear before her with such news: news of a year's fighting and suffering, and all undergone for the sake of the prize Disgrace!

But on the second day, feeling that the ordeal must be faced at last, and feeling also that he was somewhat anxious to know how the girl had fared during these long months of unavoidable silence, he started for Olga's lodging. On the way he met a friend, Antonof, a *Chinovnik* or civilian, who started at sight of him.

'Good God, Philipof,' he cried, 'is that you or your shade?'

'I—all that's left of me!' laughed Sasha. 'Why?'

'Only that I was told you were dead,' said Antonof; 'who could it have been, now, that told me!'

'The man in your dream, I should think!' said Sasha, laughing again. 'I don't die, you know; I'm not one of that kind; I mend like a rag doll.'

'I'm glad you do,' said Antonof heartily. 'We've lost good fellows enough without you!'

But when Sasha reached Olga's flat and was admitted, a surprise was in store for him. He found strangers living in her apartments, who informed him that Olga now lived in another and more fashionable quarter of the town, naming a street which he knew well to be so expensive as regards the rents of the houses, that if Olga had indeed hired a flat here, she must have utilised an entire year's income to pay the rent.

Wondering and astonished, Sasha drove across to the Palace Quay, to the house designated, and rang the bell, which was answered by Matrona, so that, Philipof concluded, there was at any rate no mistake about this being the right house.

Matrona's conduct was peculiar, and not such as Sasha, who was a very great favourite of the old nurse, might reasonably have expected. She first started violently; then she crossed herself, and spat on the ground; then she uttered several loud shrieks and subsided into the hall chair, where Sasha, unable to extract anything from her but renewed shrieks, presently left her and passed into the house. From room to room he went, richly furnished, handsome rooms, until he reached one in which Olga sat and worked at a table; she

worked, as he saw to his surprise, at tiny knitted socks, and it struck him for one instant that Olga had returned to her ancient love for dolls and was dressing one.

'Why, Olga,' he said softly, desiring to surprise but not to startle her, 'have you'—

But Olga rose to her feet with a wild cry, and starting round gazed at him with eyes through which all sorts of expressions passed in kaleidoscopic procession, but in which that of terror remained a fixture. Olga flushed and then grew white, and tried to speak, but failed; she put out an arm to keep Sasha from her—greatly to his surprise—and closed her eyes and stared again; and at last with a great cry, that might have meant anything or everything, to judge from its intensity, flung herself into his arms.

Philipof strained her warmly to his heart without a word. Olga lay there awhile sobbing and speechless; then, suddenly, she detached his hands from about her.

'God help me,' she cried, 'I forgot; I suppose I must never embrace you again'—

'Olga, my bird, what do you mean? Are you not glad to see me back again? Didn't you expect me about now? Why are you frightened of me, my soul—I am no ghost!'

'Oh, what have I done—what have I done!' wailed poor Olga. 'Why didn't you write, my love, why—why?'

'Well, what *have* you done!' laughed Philipof; 'nothing very terrible, I dare say; and as for writing, there was no post'—

'Terrible?' she interrupted. 'Why—look here!' Olga had taken hold of the sleeve of her own dress and was shaking it about before his eyes. Sasha comprehended it not.

'Well, what of it?' he said.

'It's mourning—mourning for you!' Olga burst into tears and threw herself into his arms again. 'We thought you were dead—dead—dead,' she cried. 'They told me you were—and oh! I didn't know *what* to do—for I was so miserable—and then Vladimir came, and was so kind and good, and offered to marry me, and give Matrona and me a home, and Matrona said it was the best thing to be done—and I was persuaded, for I didn't care much what happened to me, since you were dead, my love! And Vladimir said I needed a guardian, and—and we were married five months ago—and oh! thank God that you have come back to me alive—thank God, Sasha, though I don't know what will come of it all!'

Philipof loosened her arms from about his neck, and sat down on the nearest seat to think. His head buzzed with this sudden shock; his heart was like a dead thing within him. He felt too utterly amazed to take in the full significance of Olga's communication. 'Olga,' he said at last, 'who was it told you that I was dead—Dostoief?' Sasha had wit enough to reflect, even at this moment, that if this proved to be a matter of treachery, he should soon right it, as far as possible—by shooting Dostoief like a dog.

'No, no! it was the newspaper,' sobbed Olga, crying and laughing at the same time—'you were in the dreadful list—the list of the killed. Vladimir was almost as miserable as I about it—almost, not quite, and Matrona too. That's the horrid paper in the rack on the big table—the *St Petersburg Gazette*. I fainted when I saw it!'

Sasha inspected the paper indicated, and found that his name had indeed been included among the killed instead of in the list of the wounded. The discovery appeased him, in a measure.

'I see, I see!' he said; 'so that, believing me to be dead, and being afraid to live alone with Matrona, without me to protect you, you married Dostoief: did you love him, Olga?'

'God forgive me, I don't think I did quite,' she sobbed. 'How could I, my beloved—Sasha, I mean—when you had only been dead half a year? What is to be done now?' Philipof laughed rather scornfully.

'Come, come, Olga,' he said, 'you are the man's wife; what should there be to be done? His wife you are and must remain; I am to be forgotten; that of course; I would not have it otherwise. You will learn to love this Dostoief—I will stand aside; your guardian and cousin always, but your lover no longer. It was a cruel mistake, but we will make the best of it. Is it an agreement?'

For answer poor Olga laid her face in her two hands and cried so bitterly that Sasha found it rather difficult to leave her without further endearments.

(To be continued.)

FARMING CURIOSITIES.

By R. HEDGER WALLACE.

MANY are unaware, even among the agricultural classes, that besides grain and root growing, and the rearing of horses, cattle, sheep, and pigs, there are other channels of the great farming industry open to the venturesome. Poultry-farming is one of these that we have of late recognised, and as an industry it has been recommended for general adoption in these days of 'agricultural depression.' Unfortunately attempts to carry on this industry on a large scale have never proved successful—a large poultry-farm, pure and simple, does not pay. As a useful and valuable adjunct to the farmer's ordinary business, poultry-farming is profitable, and the farmers of the Heathfield district of Sussex have clearly demonstrated the fact that the rearing of chickens is a valuable insurance against the effects of depression. In the report of the sub-commissioner to the Royal Commission on Agriculture on the poultry rearing and fattening industry in the Heathfield district already referred to, it is stated that 'no poultry-farm lasts more than three or four years.' This supports the opinion we have already expressed.

The district in question is *par excellence* our poultry district. Chickens are reared to a greater or less extent by almost every one in the district, from the large farmer to the cottager; but the rearing and fattening of the chickens are two absolutely distinct branches, the chickens, as a general rule, being reared by one man and fattened by another. Cows and chickens are said to be complementary to each other, the reason given being that the chickens take the skim milk, which is indeed necessary for them and would otherwise waste. This is possible only on an ordinary farm where poultry is not the sole product of the land. Even from this progressive district where poultry-farming supplements ordinary farming there comes a complaint that poultry prices are often depressed through

Russian partridges being sold in the London market during the close-time for English partridges. If such be the case, why not enter upon partridge-farming also? It would be easier than quail-farming, and yet this has been accomplished in England. In this country quails have been bred in captivity successfully and fattened for the market. As a rule the quails on the market are netted wholesale on the shores of the Mediterranean, and sent in wicker crates, packed like sardines, to Germany, France, and England. About a third die on the journey from overcrowding, neglect, and thirst, so that fattened quails become an expensive luxury. Our English quail-farmer has been very successful in the hatching of these birds, and it is in this perhaps that the greatest risk lies. Pass this initial difficulty, and quail-farming may be introduced into other districts than that of Nuneaton, where at present it is a monopoly. The brood-hen quails nest regularly like barn-door fowls, and lay even in winter. Kept in runs of fifty birds each, they are fed on fattening foods, and when ready for the market are killed and plucked on the farm, and then packed off to the dealers. The demand for quail is steady, they are always on the markets, and the price seldom varies. Even the feathers are marketable, and certain quail feathers are in great demand for 'fly hackles' by all artificial-fly makers.

Another agricultural industry, not very common, is geese-farming. Of course geese, along with ducks and poultry, are kept by the majority of farmers, but not in such numbers as to require any special attention. There are some large geese-farmers in England. In Essex, for example, there is an establishment which will have in its pens from 30,000 to 40,000 birds getting ready for the market. The majority of these birds are hatched artificially by incubators, as it is found to be more reliable than brooding geese; although a percentage of incubator-hatched birds are always deformed and useless. A bird hatched in May will be ready for the table by October. While fattening they are kept three in a pen, with room to turn round only, and fed on bruised oats made into a paste with milk, also on curds, whey, boiled barley, old bread and dripping, and, just before killing, on maize boiled in mutton fat. The birds are killed and plucked on the farm before being sent to market, the wing quills going to quill-pen makers and the feathers to feather dealers. Defoe in his *Tour through the Eastern Counties of England*, undertaken in 1722, seems to have been greatly impressed with the large droves of turkeys and geese which he met on the way up to London. We read of the Norfolk turkeys coming on foot, in droves of from three hundred to a thousand, and in so many droves that by one route alone, and that not the most crowded, a hundred and fifty thousand birds travelled in one season. Further, he tells us that 'within these few years' it has been found 'practicable to make the geese travel on foot too, as well as the turkeys, and a prodigious number are brought up to London in droves from the farthest parts of Norfolk, even from the fen-country about Lynn, Downham, Wisbech, and the Washes; as also from the east side of Norfolk and Suffolk, whence it is very frequent now to meet droves with a thousand, sometimes two thousand in a

drove. They begin to drive them generally in August, by which time the harvest is almost over, and the geese may feed in the stubbles as they go. Thus they hold on to the end of October, when the roads begin to be too stiff and deep for their broad feet and short legs to march in. We may safely say on the testimony of Defoe that over one hundred and sixty years ago there must have been some large geese and turkey farmers in England. The season for geese is at Michaelmas and Christmas.

Duck-farming, another agricultural industry, like geese-farming, is carried on principally about Aylesbury and the surrounding district, and it also is not of recent origin. In this district the persons who engage in duck-fattening are generally men of the labouring or small village tradesman class, and as a rule the breeding and rearing of the ducks are in different hands—breeders being farmers. It is the main object of the duck-fattener to get his stock ready for the market in February and March, when the game season ends and prices are high. The food of the young ducks consists principally of chopped eggs, rice, greens, and barley meal. This trade stands on a different footing from that of poultry-farming, for the market for early ducklings is limited and remunerative and not affected by foreign competition. So far we have dealt with birds only.

We now come on our list to an industry that we think few are aware of—namely, that of guinea-pig farming. Generally we associate guinea-pigs with experiments made in the interests of medical science, for being so subject to contagious disorders, medical experimenters select them in preference to less expensive rabbits.

We do not yet appreciate the tailless cavy as an article of human food. In France they sell them for rabbits; and there are three farms in this country where they are reared, and which export them to France, one farmer alone exporting over 150,000 of the little beasts. The flavour of the meat is said to be identical with that of rabbit meat. These animals need constant attention to keep them out of mischief, as they are little demons to fight, and they have a habit of chewing up whatever fragments they find scattered about till they die of gastric congestion. In their habits they are subject to unaccountable panics, and often rush about squeaking, and then huddle together quietly for the rest of the day. They are very prolific; and the young are not blind like the young of the rabbit, and often when only two days old, it is said, will eat grass and sop. On the farm they are fed on sop made of milk and stale but not sour bread, along with green stuff, barley, and hay. In guinea-pig farming, as in quail-farming, it is admitted that large profits are made—due, no doubt, to the fact that there is so little competition. Probably the rabbit you so much enjoyed at your hotel-dinners when touring in France was simply the humble cavy dressed up; but if you also partook of *escargot*, then there is no deception in the matter, for you had simply a dish of snails.

Snail-farming forms a peculiar branch of agricultural industry in France and other countries, and the consumption of them in France is very large. Edible snails vary greatly in size; the large white ones are the real *escargot*, but this term is usually employed to designate all edible

snails adapted to table purposes. But in the markets, besides *escargot*, there are two other varieties, known as *limace* and *limacon*, the former being of medium size, and the latter quite small. Though the great majority of the edible snails produced in France are of natural growth, their artificial culture is carried on to a very considerable extent. They are propagated from August to October in ground especially prepared for the purpose, and fed with cabbage, clover, &c. During the winter they are sheltered in houses composed of brick or wood, and they are gathered and marketed from April to June. In the Tyrol from June to the middle of August the snails are collected from every available damp place and taken to the feeding-ground near the owner's dwelling. This is a bit of garden ground, free from trees and shrubs, and surrounded on all sides by running water. In this feeding-ground are little heaps of mountain-pine twigs, mixed loosely with wood-moss, and these twigs when dry are replaced by fresh ones. Every day they are fed on cabbage leaves and grass, and when cold weather sets in they go under cover—that is, they collect under the heaps of twigs and bury themselves, and there seal themselves up for the winter. When this has been successfully accomplished they are collected, packed in perforated boxes lined with straw, and sent off to Paris and other towns.

Marseilles enjoys a great reputation for special preparations of *escargots*. Snails are regarded as dainties, and something of a luxury. On snail-farms the cost of preparing them for the market is greater than the cost of producing them.

Perhaps the most peculiar agricultural industry that we are aware of is spider-farming. There are not many spider-farms in existence. We have only heard of two, so we do not think the spider-farmer can suffer from competition. The spiders are reared for two definite ends, either to spin cobwebs in wine-cellar, or webs which, like the cocoons of silkworms, can be utilised for commercial purposes. In one of the usual low stone farmhouses common in the region of the Loire resides a market-gardener whose main object in farming spiders is to furnish spiders of the kind needed for the wine-vaults of dealers and the cellars of the *nouveaux riches*, so that new, shining, freshly-labelled bottles will in three months' time be draped with a filmy lace of cobwebs, and have the appearance of twenty years' storage conferred at a small cost. It must be remembered that spiders are not all web spinners, and further, that those bred on a spider-farm and sold must fetch good prices, as they represent the survival of the fittest. Spiders are great cannibals; the parents eat their children, and the children in turn readily eat each other. We have heard of another farm where the spiders are reared for their web, so as to turn it into practical use as spider-silk. The spider's web is much smoother and brighter-coloured than the thread of the silkworm, but it is much more fragile. It has been woven, and is vastly softer and more beautiful than ordinary silk, but it is as expensive as it is beautiful.

We have now only space to note that rabbit-farming is another phase of an agricultural industry not on the usual beaten track. Through it we get our 'Ostend' rabbits, and in America

there are rabbit-farms which turn out each about six hundred rabbits a year. The prolific character of the rabbit is well known, and the cost of rearing them is infinitesimal in comparison with the prices they fetch.

If instead of the farmed rabbit we prefer the wild bunny, then, as all farmers, gamekeepers, and poachers well know, ferrets are indispensable. To meet the demand for this form of 'cattle' there are in the kingdom three or four large ferret-farms. One of these farms alone has a stock of over 40,000 ferrets, and a large number of attendants. They are treated like small dogs, and fed on milk, stale bread, horseflesh, bullock's blood, and rabbit meat. If the expenses of a ferret-farm were not so high, it is said that ferret-farming would be one of the finest industries imaginable.

We have now drawn the reader's attention to some agricultural industries which are little known, and yet are profitable. We have by no means included all the curious industries which are associated with farms and farmers, yet those we have noticed will probably be unknown to many.

BY THE MAIL-BALLOON.

By ARTHUR M. HOSWOOD,
Author of *In the Shadow of the Sphinx*.

PARIS in October 1870—invested—cut off from the outer world, as though she were a ship in mid-ocean or a caravan deep in the desert: 'as yet not actively bombarded, but knowing full well it *must* come. For days, weeks past, the besiegers have been busy erecting batteries and planting guns.

Midnight is striking. Quite twelve times the twelve strokes can be heard in chorus from one point alone of the city, rising and falling on the gusts of damp, night air, sweeping over the ramparts manned by 40,000 National Guards, echoing past the grim forts, whence the electric search-light quivers and flashes, and reaching faintly the ears of the iron army of investment, huddled over watch-fires and stretched out in dismantled habitations.

In the grounds of the gas-works of La Villette something huge and black, like the dome of a cathedral, looms against the lighter sky, high above the outline of the buildings. Indeed, it might easily be taken for a cupola did it not sway and roll ominously from side to side with every rush of air.

In reality it is a balloon preparing for a flight northward to carry—or attempt to carry—a despatch of mail-bags clear of the prohibiting reach of the enemy's encircling hordes.

There are but few people present to witness its ascent. The novelty of such spectacles has already worn off. Besides, the hour is not propitious. Since the 28th of September this system of postal communication with the provinces and abroad has been in vogue. Both private correspondence and official despatches are taken, and the balloons are started as regularly as the weather will permit.

These sacks, then, bearing the hopes and fears of many a troubled heart, have already been stowed away in the car of the 'Gambetta'—such is the name of to-night's aerial mail—and there remain but one or two little matters to attend to

before the weights are cast off. The aeronaut, a short, broadly built, gray-bearded man, very much resembling a sea-captain, stands with his hands thrust deep in the pockets of his thick pea-jacket and a fur cap pulled down over his ears, superintending the preparations. Everything being ready to his satisfaction, he shakes hands with the chief of the gas-works, and is about to enter the car, when the sound of a carriage furiously driven along the roadway, which suddenly ceases without the gates of the enclosure, attracts general attention, and the aeronaut pauses in his valedictory remarks. The next minute the figure of a gentleman, hatless and in a state of extreme perturbation, bursts within the circle of lanterns that surround and illuminate the car of the 'Gambetta,' and producing a crumpled note, exclaims in French, but with an unmistakable English accent:

'I have a letter for M. Berthold—which is M. Berthold?'

The aeronaut lays his hand on his breast and bows; whereat he is presented with the missive, which he skims by the light of an upheld lantern, and learns that he is authorised and requested to allow the bearer—M. Frank Goodchild, a British officer, urgently summoned home—to take passage with him through the air out of the besieged city to such place beyond the reach of the enemy as the winds might carry them.

With the native courtesy of a Parisian, M. Berthold bids the young Englishman enter the car, and receives in disjointed sentences additional particulars of the urgency of his passenger's case.

'This very evening seen the *Times*—my regiment announced to sail for the East on 20th—day after to-morrow—order to rejoin never reached me—and if I am too late to embark with it, shall be dismissed the service—disgraced for life—my heartiest thanks for allowing me to come—only chance—but forlorn hope.'

The speaker pauses for breath, and somebody sympathetically hands him a cap to replace his own, lost in his hurried transit hither. With a suitable expression of gratitude for this further kindness, Lieutenant Frank Goodchild of Her Britannic Majesty's Royal Brecon Fusiliers subsides upon a pile of mail-bags, and falls to mopping his florid countenance and smoothing his short, blond hair under the incongruous, peaked workman's cap. At a signal now given by M. Berthold, the moorings of the balloon are cast off, and the 'Gambetta' quits *terra firma*, soaring aloft like a bird that has regained its freedom.

The wind has been blowing unsteadily in squalls, one of which has just expended itself as the ascent takes place, and a complete lull ensues. Almost vertically the travellers rise to a height of half-a-mile. M. Berthold and the young English officer lean over the side of the car, gazing at the strange spectacle of Paris viewed from this altitude. The sight inspires Lieutenant Goodchild with admiration not unminged with awe. He restrains his breath and clutches instinctively at the sides of the wickerwork basket that holds him suspended in space. What he sees far below are the lights on the ramparts that completely outline the confines of the city, and the illuminated streets, like bright threads, that interlace with each other; the whole effect somewhat resembling a star-bespangled cushion. The search-light

thrown out all around from the fortifications, pulsating like phosphorescent fins of a fish, at times gives the city the appearance of *moving*—of a veritable monster octopus. Then the lights become less defined, then blurred and mixed up with each other, resolving themselves into a mere luminous patch.

The mail continues to move slowly north, and is approaching the enemy's position, when suddenly the moon at its full bursts through the clouds, transforming the balloon into a globe of glistening silver, whereupon M. Berthold utters a malediction between his teeth and spits angrily into space.

'We shall be seen—a pity!' he grumbles.

'Will that matter? They will have little chance of hitting us at this height if they fire, surely,' urges Goodchild.

For reply, the aeronaut points towards the German lines, remarking resignedly: 'I knew they had *that* in readiness.'

And Goodchild beholds a counterpart of their own fabric rising from the earth at a point just calculated to intercept the 'Gambetta' by the time it reaches their altitude.

The dreaded stranger steadily rises, and the 'Gambetta' involuntarily advances towards it, until M. Berthold and the Englishman can see the gleaming apex of their enemy show out beneath them against the black earth.

With a sinking heart the lieutenant admits to himself that their capture is inevitable. But five minutes ago he was congratulating himself on the prospect of reaching England in time to rejoin his regiment on the eve of departure; and now his hopes are lost. Escape is impossible. The German balloon all at once throws out ballast, shooting up to their level, and after wavering about is gradually drawn to them by the same influence with which two ships lying near together in mid-ocean gravitate towards each other.

The shout of triumph that comes from Teutonic throats has a startling effect suspended here a mile from the earth under the immense blue-black starry dome of night; even more so, perhaps, than the half-dozen rifles that are levelled menacingly at the 'Gambetta.' Nearer and nearer draws the German, till the silhouettes of dark military figures crowding the car and standing in the network are close at hand, when a grapnel is dexterously thrown, which catches firmly on the car of the mail-balloon.

M. Berthold had whipped out a knife to cut the cord, but the Germans detected the glint of the blade, and a hoarse voice roared out in French: 'Drop that knife, or we will shoot you like a dog!'

Indeed, three or four needle-guns were again levelled at the devoted head of the aeronaut, who accepted the situation with a show of calmness; folding his arms across his breast, and without withdrawing his gaze from the enemy, he whispers to his passenger, who was low down in the car: 'Don't let them see you. They think I am alone; and I have an idea. Listen!' Then followed a rapid communication.

While he was uttering these words, the Germans had opened the valve of their balloon, which commenced to sink, dragging down with it, by reason of its sheer weight, the 'Gambetta,' a majestic captive.

Soon the dark earth seemed rising to meet them, and then the car of the enemy had reached the soil, and the flabby silk collapsed sideways. The mail-balloon, still fully inflated, twisted and writhed twenty feet from the ground, held fast by the grapnel. M. Berthold was now commanded to open his valve, but this order the Frenchman pretended to misunderstand, and threw out instead a rope-ladder, by which he commenced to descend. As he lowered himself over the edge of the car, he murmured to his concealed passenger.

'All is well : they haven't seen you. I descend—and then'—

The ladder quivered and swayed, and the Frenchman had delivered himself up to his captors, exclaiming in a loud voice as he did so, with a true Frenchman's love of effect : 'Adieu, my trusty "Gambetta," adieu, adieu !'

And then something strange happens. A hand grasping a knife projects from the car of the apostrophised balloon—the grapnel rope vibrates, parts, falls in serpentine coils to the earth—and the 'Gambetta' has escaped.

The Germans for the moment are completely taken by surprise, never dreaming that there was a second occupant of the car ; and before they can recover, the balloon has swiftly mounted, and they are subjected to a shower of sand-bags, as Goodchild promptly throws out one after the other in rapid succession.

A torrent of expletives bursts from their lips, and seizing their rifles they discharge them in an irregular volley at the quickly receding fabric.

Lieutenant Frank Goodchild, from his point of vantage, is cut short in a hearty English guffaw, and clasps his hand to his head. A bullet has torn the skin above the temple and grazed his skull. And before the Germans can fire again, he is lying motionless in the bottom of the car, and the uncontrolled balloon is sailing up, up—higher and higher into space, carrying her unconscious burden swiftly towards the stars.

A strain of music, faint, subtle, and sweet. One moment it is all but lost : the next it swells and vibrates like a human voice, and grows so distinct that the refrain is distinguishable.

From exactly half-a-mile beneath poor Goodchild's bloody head there wells up the pathetic air of 'Annie Laurie.' The wounded man is just recovering his senses, and mechanically his lips form the words of the old ballad, which, from being the regimental march of the Royal Brecon Fusiliers, is so familiar to him. Then a cheer—such a rousing cheer, although minute and thin—strikes his ear. '*Hurrah! Hurra-a-h! Hurra-a-h!*' Goodchild struggles to a sitting posture and looks from side to side wildly. A confused recollection of the late dramatic events floods his brain. He recognises the fact that he is still sailing in the balloon ; but, merciful heavens ! where has he been wafted to ? Music !—'Annie Laurie' played by a band !—cheers ! this pain across his head ! Is he going mad ? he asks himself.

With an effort he raises himself farther and strains his dim eyes over the side of the car. He can see nothing but mist—is he going blind ? He feels for his flask—he is dying with thirst—

and takes a sip of brandy and water. Then he falls back and tries to think what he ought to do. Then presently he feels a shock—then another ; and he is flung forward and rolled over.

The 'Gambetta' has returned to earth and is tearing its wasted proportions against the naked branches of a tree, while the car has fallen into a ditch half-full of water.

Goodchild next finds himself standing in a field, supported by some men. They don't look like Frenchmen to him.

'What part of France is this ?' he asks faintly.

'What d'ye say ?' queried one of the men in English.

Goodchild stared at the speaker as though petrified.

'Where am I ; what country is this ?' he gasps in his native tongue.

'What country ! Why, you poor fellow, in England, to be sure.'

It was true. During the period Goodchild had lain unconscious, the balloon, after drifting first one way and then another, had crossed the British Channel, and finally sunk to the ground, through a gradual escape of gas, within a mile of Chatham in Kent—this on the 20th of October, the very day that Goodchild's regiment marched through that garrison town to embark from the dockyard for the East !

H. M. Transport *Elephant* has just been hauled into the Medway, when a boat comes alongside and there is assisted up the gangway on the deck a ghastly object.

A man with a bandaged head, matted blood-stained hair, blood-stained face, blood-stained clothes, blood-stained hands—a pitiable object, trembling with fever and exhaustion—is led into the presence of the colonel, who is standing on the quarter-deck surrounded by his officers, all smoking and chatting gaily. They break off and stare blankly at the apparition.

The apparition, for its part, endeavours to draw itself up straight, and raising a hand in salute, exclaims in a crying voice :

'Just in time, sir'—And then stops short and falls in a heap upon the deck at the feet of the commanding officer.

Lieutenant Frank Goodchild had rejoined his regiment.

THE MONTH :

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

EGYPT, the gift of the river-god, the country which saw the very dawn of history, the land of wondrous architecture—of temples and obelisks inscribed with the records of centuries ; this place of many gods is, it seems, to be given over to the modern deity called Electricity. There is something sacrilegious in the idea of utilising the waters of the Nile for churning out electricity, and planting its banks with cotton-spinning mills, sugar-factories, and irrigation-machinery ; but this is the scheme foreshadowed in the report of Professor Forbes, who considers the general circumstances of Egypt well adapted for such a change. Irrigation, he tells us, could be extended, as well as cheapened, by utilising the energy now running to waste at the Nile cataracts, and the

cost of carrying coal from Alexandria to Upper Egypt, which at present is so formidable, would be entirely obviated. The cataract power would be available all the year round for factory purposes and also for working a railway. This is an outline of the programme sketched out by Professor Forbes, who will return to Egypt later on in order to make a complete survey, and to prepare for the government a full project for employing electricity in the land of the Pharaohs.

Another electrical scheme, that which utilises the Falls of Foyers, to which so much opposition was raised a short time ago, is now in full operation, and at the recent meeting of the British Aluminium Company, which owns the property, an interesting account of the works was given by the chairman. The factory at Foyers is in conjunction with works at Larne and Greenock. The ore (as bauxite) is carried to Larne, where it is turned into alumina of very pure quality—this alumina is taken to Foyers, where every ton of it produces half a ton of the metal aluminium. At Greenock the work done is that of making electrical carbons, which are subsequently used in the furnaces at Foyers for reducing the metal from its ore. Greenock being near Glasgow, abundant material for making carbons is available from the linings of the gas-retorts. The company owns a steamer which is the link of communication between the factories, and the work all round seems to be carried on with the greatest possible economy. It is stated that the demand for aluminium is increasing at a very rapid rate, so that the company have no lack of customers. No coal is used at Foyers, and the factory there will not therefore have that blackening effect upon its beautiful surroundings which was so much feared.

Few things escape the searching eye of the ubiquitous camera, and it would almost seem that the photographer must rest from his labours, having no more worlds to conquer. One enthusiastic amateur, however, Mr T. C. Porter, of Eton, was not of this opinion, for he had never heard of a photograph having been taken of the shadow of Teneriffe. This peak, which rises nearly thirteen thousand feet above the sea, will, under favourable climatic conditions, cast its shadow on the adjacent air, towards the close of day—a shadow ten miles high—which has the appearance of a spectral mountain. Mr Porter succeeded in his difficult enterprise, and recently showed lantern slides from his pictures at the Camera Club, London. Every phase of the phenomenon was beautifully shown in these pictures—first the shadow with its apex on the horizon, next its rising higher and higher until it reaches its maximum. Then comes a most interesting change, duly noted in the photographs. A convex shadow slowly creeps up the spectral peak, and finally engulfs it. This is the shadow of the earth itself.

The pitiable cry 'made in Germany,' has of late years been heard among our opticians, and more particularly in connection with the construction of photographic lenses. The German made articles, moreover, possess advantages which hitherto have been denied to instruments of the kind made elsewhere. The secret of their efficiency lies in the glass of which they are made, the manufacture of which at the

works of Jena has been carefully fostered by the German government. In this way research has been encouraged, and has led to the production of glass having optical properties which were believed, until now, to be almost impossible of attainment. This glass in the hands of British opticians is found to yield as good results as in the German made lenses, and in one instrument, known as Dallmeyer's stigmatic lens, the German results have been altogether surpassed.

Under the title of 'tree strawberries,' Mr S. Morgan has recently made public a method of cultivating the most delicious of our summer fruits, which is said to be most effective both in forwarding the ripening of a crop and in increasing its weight. The treatment refers only to the *Elton Pine*, which is peculiarly adapted to close planting and upright training. Here is the method of procedure. The plants were planted out in a bed on February 1st, and the next year after the fruits were set, carrying from sixty to a hundred and twenty fruits each plant, they were thinned down to forty and sixty fruits per plant. Then placing two sticks on each side of each plant, and holding the plants with their fruit trusses in one hand, the gardeners bound the whole round with ribbons of flannelette about four inches from the ground. No straw was used, and the bound-up plants had the appearance of little trees, with plenty of room for sun and air to complete the ripening process. By this method of culture the strawberry plants can be set within six inches of each other, and nine times the usual quantity planted within a given space.

At a recent meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, and in the discussion which followed the reading of a paper by Sir Clement Markham on 'The North Polar Problem,' Dr Nansen stated his belief that the reaching of the north pole was quite a secondary consideration, and he thought with enough dogs, say two hundred, it would not be a difficult matter. But he did not see the use of an enterprise which would, to his mind, represent a waste of time and energy. If they wanted scientific observations, the best thing to do was to go into the ice as he had done. A ship like the *Fram*, and a better one could be built now that they had had experience of what was wanted, made an excellent observatory, for it was possible to have all kinds of laboratories on board. Five years in such a ship would give a man such valuable observations that he would be repaid many times over, and would secure rich material for forming a correct estimate of the physical conditions of the North Polar Region.

It is the common opinion that lunacy is on the increase, and the belief has been fostered by writers who deplore the evils of alcoholism, excessive tea-drinking and tobacco-smoking, and other vices to which, in this age of hurry and restless movement, weak human nature is prone. We are glad to find, from the recent report of the commissioners in lunacy, that the alleged increase of insanity is an illusion which they have been able to dispel in a most satisfactory manner. We all know that figures may be made to prove anything; and looking at the figures only, it would appear that there are many more lunatics now in proportion to the population than there were a few years ago. But the commissioners have carefully sifted these figures, and show that the in-

crease is due to better methods of registration, and to the increasing use which is made of pauper lunatic asylums. It is among the paupers that the apparent increase is found, and not among those who are generally supposed to be more susceptible to brain trouble.

We have heard much of the Maxim machine gun within the last year or two, during which little wars with savage men have brought that terrible engine of slaughter into prominence. But the Maxim is now eclipsed by the new Hotchkiss machine gun, which is said to be more efficient in action, to require no water jacket to cool its barrel, and to consist of much fewer component parts. The new gun is made in three types: for field, mountain, or naval use; it weighs but thirty-three pounds, and can fire single cartridges or rain them upon an enemy at the rate of five hundred per minute. The weapon has an ordinary steel barrel, with a second closed barrel beneath it, the two being connected by a small hole not far from the muzzle. When the bullet passes this hole, part of the gas generated by the charge passes through, and drives back a piston in the lower barrel. This piston throws out the empty cartridge, inserts a new one, and fires the gun, and so the action goes on so long as the piece is fed with cartridges. We need not deplore the introduction of this terrible man-slaying device, for such an invention brings us distinctly nearer the time when nations will come to the conclusion that war is far too terrible a remedy for any grievance under which they can suffer.

A novel system of artificial lighting, applicable both to public halls and private dwellings, is being introduced by the Imperial Oil Lighting Company. The novel feature of the method is the supply of oil (paraffin) from a main tank or reservoir, which may be placed outside the building if preferred, but must be at a sufficient height to secure a steady supply to the lamps in circuit with it. The oil from the tank is first carried by means of a pipe to the regulator, a device of very simple construction, upon which the efficiency of the system depends. This regulator consists of a tube of mercury into which the end of the oil-supply tube dips, the mercury tube rising as the oil is delivered, thus closing the supply until more is required. Each lamp has an oil container just large enough to keep the wick saturated; there is no room for oil vapour to accumulate, and therefore no risk of explosion. The cost of installation is said to be about the same as for gas-fittings, while the expense of maintenance is only one-sixth of gas illumination, taking gas at three shillings per thousand feet. We have no means of checking these figures; but in any case the system should prove useful in districts where oil lamps are in use.

Some time ago it was intimated in these columns that the Great Eastern Railway was about to try the experiment of conveying, at a cheap rate, boxes of farm-produce direct from producer to consumer. In view of the depressed state of agriculture this was a most interesting experiment, and we are glad to record that it has proved a most successful one. At a recent conference between the railway authorities and the leading agriculturists in East Anglia, it was stated that during the past year no fewer than sixty thousand of these inexpensive boxes had

been carried over the line, and that during the first two months of the present year the number transported was more than four times that carried during the two corresponding months of 1896. The average value of the contents of these boxes was said to be seven shillings.

The International Society of Wood-engravers was formed a few years ago, for the purpose of promoting a very beautiful form of art which had met with a potent rival in those blocks which owe their production to photographic processes. At their fourth annual dinner, the chairman, Mr Seymour Lucas, said that there was a prevalent idea 'that wood-engraving was about to die, that process was going to kill it, and that there would be nothing left for wood-engravers except to become photographers or go to the workhouse.' He combated this statement and expressed the belief that it would never become possible to find any machinery or invention that could compete with the hands when directed by an artist. Photography had not killed miniature-painting, and it would be a long time before it killed the great art of wood-engraving. He believed that there was room for both engraving and process blocks. We are glad to hear such encouraging words with regard to an art which seemed to be threatened with something like extinction. A well-cut wood block is a very beautiful thing, and when the public have had a surfeit of the mechanically produced and cheaper form of illustrations which are so common now, a reaction will probably come, and there will be a demand for the neglected work of the graver.

In a paper on the Timber Supply of the British Empire which was recently read at the Imperial Institute by Dr Schlich, it was stated that the United Kingdom imported timber to an enormous extent, the chief supplies coming from Russia, Sweden, Norway, Germany, France, and the United States. Canada was the only British dependency which at all rivalled the exports from the Baltic. Canada was estimated to contain one and a quarter million square miles of wood-producing territory, but fires were frequent and disastrous, and the timber lost in this way was calculated to be many times more than that cut down and exported. But at the same time, with proper management and careful conservation of the forests, Canada ought to be capable of supplying the whole world with wood for many years to come. The lecturer advocated the creation of a forest department, the establishment of new forests by planting on vacant lands, the founding of schools of forestry, and government assistance in furtherance of these objects.

Some further particulars regarding the ascent of the mountain of Aconcagua by Mr Fitzgerald's expedition on behalf of the Royal Geographical Society have been published since our note of the fact that the highest peak of the Andes had been conquered. At a height of 23,000 feet Mr Fitzgerald found himself unable to proceed, and his chief guide went on alone, and reached the mountain-top. A month later, Mr Vines, the geologist to the expedition, also reached the highest point of the mountain after an arduous journey of nine hours. Referring to the difficulties of the enterprise, Mr Vines has stated that every four or five yards he was compelled to stoop down on all fours, and wait for some

minutes to recover his breath. This was the only mode of ascent possible at such an altitude, and it will suggest the possibility of using for future exploration of the kind some artificial method of respiration. It will be remembered, perhaps, by some of our readers that Mr H. A. Fleuss, some years ago, invented a device for breathing in irrespirable atmospheres, such as the after-damp of a mine. The apparatus was thoroughly efficient. It seems to us that a modification of it would be extremely useful for mountaineering at altitudes in which the rarefaction of the air forms the chief obstacle to progress, and we invite the attention of the Royal Geographical Society to the suggestion.

Among the commodities which have greatly increased in value during the past few years is the metal platinum, the price of which has more than quadrupled. The demand has indeed almost exceeded the supply, and has been occasioned by the new uses which have been found for the metal, the electrician wanting it for the necessary links of connection between the interior and exterior of the ubiquitous glow lamp, and the photographer in a minor degree for his prints. The principal source of supply is Russia, which produces more than forty times as much as all other countries combined; and even there the metal is found only in the southern Ural Mountains.

A correspondent in Tasmania, referring to the large quantities of wood pulp now employed for paper-making, tells an interesting story of what he believes to be the first attempt at enlisting wood in this service. This was at Dartford in Kent, thirty years ago, where straw was already in use for the rougher kinds of paper. Seeing that loads of sawdust were being thrown into the river in order to get rid of a waste-product, our correspondent suggested to a paper-maker that this fibreless material should be pulped with pampas grass, having a strong fibre, so that the one should neutralise the other. His notion was laughed at as being impracticable, but a German clerk, who heard the conversation, took up the idea, and pulp from wood was ultimately made.

Machines for painting large surfaces have now been in successful use for some time, their first extensive employment being, if we remember rightly, for the decoration of the World's Fair buildings at Chicago. In these machines the paint is projected in a fine spray by means of an air blast. It is rather curious that a machine on this same principle is now being used for removing paint from metallic and other surfaces. This latter machine is in reality a sand-blast apparatus which by simple attrition will remove paint at the rate of one square foot in two minutes. A United States cruiser has recently had the whole of her hull cleaned by this method, the paint and scale coming off freely and exposing a clean metal surface, the work being accomplished much more rapidly and thoroughly than by any other means.

The *Revue Encyclopédique* publishes a remarkable account of some successful cures by Dr Calot, an Italian surgeon practising in France, of that distressing deformity commonly known as hunch-back—a disease generally of tubercular origin, and which often follows injury in young children. Dr Calot places the child to be operated upon under chloroform, and it is held face downwards by four assistants while he applies great pressure

with his hands over the area of the deformity. In this way he gradually presses down the vertebrae to their normal level, an operation requiring great care, as a false movement might cause rupture of the spinal cord, and thus bring about instant death. The patient is next swathed in bandages of wadding and plaster of Paris, and thus remains for three or four months. When this bandage is removed the back is flat, but is rebandaged, and this second application is followed by the wearing of a corset. Photographs illustrating this account show the patient, a boy five years old, being operated upon: and also picture him before and after treatment. Dr Calot has only operated upon children, and it seems doubtful whether in the case of adults, where the bony structure is completely established, any such method would be possible.

The new torpedo-boat *Turbinia*, built at Wallsend by the Marine Steam Turbine Company, and fitted up with the Hon. Charles A. Parson's compound steam-turbine, has made as much as thirty-eight miles an hour on certain recent speed trials, which makes it rank as one of the fastest little vessels afloat. She is only one hundred feet long and nine feet wide, with three motors—the high pressure on the starboard side, the medium pressure on the port side, and the low pressure in the centre. She has nine propellers, three on each shaft. The description of a trial trip on this vessel is strongly suggestive of Mr Wood's story, 'No. 90's Last Torpedo,' in a recent *Journal*.

A very fine photograph of the great Nebula in Orion, by Dr Isaac Roberts, appears in the April number of *Knowledge*. It was the result of a dual exposure with an interval of five days between them, the total time occupied being seven hours and thirty-five minutes. Dr Roberts believes that this photograph depicts the maximum of extent and detail that can be shown by the aid of photographic methods.

An order has recently been issued by the Home Office relating to carbide of calcium, one of the latest products of the electric furnace, from which that most beautiful illuminating agent known as acetylene gas is prepared by the simple addition of water. This order gives warning that contact with moisture 'causes a dangerous evolution of the highly inflammable gas known as acetylene,' and then notifies that henceforth it will be unlawful to keep carbide of calcium except in virtue of a license to be obtained from the local authority under the Petroleum Act.

MRS WHIN'S CADDIE.

By R. RAMSAY, Author of *Miss Drummond's Dilemma*, &c.

I.

Dow was a heartless wretch. To put it mildly, there was generally a twinkle in his eye, and his tongue was not tied to the ways of truth. Those he liked spoke of him with respect, but the awe of people he did not favour was mixed with fear, and they called him a young villain softly among themselves.

There was a legend that Dow had been born on the links; it was quite certain that he had been bred upon them—escaping wonderfully from school, and becoming a great authority on golf long before he was taller than a club. He was

a tyrant among the caddies, and his fame was as wide as the sea that licked round the sands below.

'I'll put you in charge of Dow. He'll—er—take you round the course,' said the General's introducer, on that lonely hero's first coming upon the green. 'That is, if we can get hold of him—there's always a run on Dow.'

'Who is he?'

'Oh! a caddie.'

'I see,' said the General, twisting his big moustache; 'a small chap to carry the clubs—and pick out the right one—hey?'

The General's introducer was one of the many who respected Dow. He wagged his forefinger coaxingly, and a little shape rose slowly out of the whins—Dow was inured to prickles—approaching the two with a solemn stalk.

'Can you—will you take my friend round this morning?' said the General's introducer humbly. Dow considered.

'I can gie him a round,' he said; 'but he manna be ower slow. I hae twa leddies and the Juke forbye.'

The General's friend lent him his second-best driver and an iron putter, and hurried away to play a match of his own. The General had never played golf before. He did some queer things, and Dow admonished him with all proper scorn.

'I guessed that ye couldna play when I saw him gie ye that auld thing,' he said, glancing at the weapon that was being wrongly swung. 'Where d' ye come frae?'

'India,' said the General shortly.

'Ye're a sodger?' Dow inquired, with a lordly condescension, as he put the ball on the tee, and drew out of reach of the General's wild brandishing of his club.

'Ho! ye wadna kill mony niggers if ye couldna hit straighter nor that!' said Dow.

The General was not humble. He wound up that round by pitching his driver upon the green, and taking his small instructor suddenly by the scruff. Then he shook him like a kitten in the middle of the links.

'I'll no forget you,' said Dow, staring in astonishment after this bold stranger. 'I'll no forget!'

Dow had his favourites. The Duke was one of these; but he was not earnest enough, and had a frivolous way of bringing out an umbrella, which Dow, the contemptuous, was obliged to carry. The minister was another; he—while playing fairly—talked theology in a general way with Dow, who thirsted for information about the devil. The first favourite of all was a Mrs Whin.

She was a little widow who lived in a big house she had taken lately, and who put all her mind for the present into the business of learning golf. She was related distantly to the Duke, and so people made much of her; some liked, some hated her, but every one was polite.

Dow was her right hand and counsellor; she never played without his little, pale, saucy face at her elbow, and when he had bidden her get a scarlet coat, she had done so meekly.

'It doosna look purposeselike for you to be creepin' about the links in black if you were five times a weedow,' he had pronounced, and she had laughed, and ordered the coat when she went in to Aberdeen.

Dow was greatly vexed when Mrs Whin and the General got acquainted.

The General was close and shy. He put up at the 'Gordon Arms,' and seemed to have no plausible reason for appearing in this particular spot. His one friend—a man Mrs Whin knew slightly—had got him into the club, and introduced him to one or two old fogies—had also presented him casually to Mrs Whin. But this friend had gone south, and could not be applied to for information—and the General remained, pottering about the town and links like a fish out of water.

There were two or three old soldiers thereabouts, but they had all gout and long troops of daughters. The General was an exception, tall, spare, and fiery, with sad eyes that interested Mrs Whin.

'The man is a mystery!' said one lady to another. Their husbands could not help them in this thing for once.

A company of women were sitting in the varnished veranda of the ladies' club, and one or two more were leaning over the palings talking. It was tea-time, but the good people whose turn it was to boil the kettle had made a terrible smoke inside, and the rest had all crowded out.

Within a stone's-throw was the men's stern granite club-house; behind, the green golf-links rose and dipped to the sea; and in front, a far speck, was Mrs Whin's red jacket, near which hovered the long shape of the General. Dow, a sulky, slow-moving object, was hugging a stack of clubs.

Mrs Whin was making coquettish motions, raising her driver, and dropping it in the swing, and asking about her stroke. The General—that bad player—was counselling earnestly. After a little they parted, and Mrs Whin came tripping up to tea.

'What is he here for?' said one of those sitting outside the club, as she turned her head to glance in at the others struggling with smoke inside. They were not all conscious that Mrs Whin, who had entered, was by an open window.

'Nobody knows—and he is continually prowling'—

'I wouldn't say that of a soldier, May!'

'Well, scouting—spy?'

'No, no!'

'At any rate, marching round people's back premises. Call it what you like! The Blackies of Hendarroch distinctly saw him wandering sadly outside the servants' gate. You know they have made a fine new avenue for themselves. When they approached he fled.'

'Were you speaking about Hendarroch? Oh, the Blackies have spoiled the place!' said a stout old lady with seven daughters, who sat on a creaking seat.

'No, Mrs Milne; we were talking of the General.'

'It is odd,' said the stout lady slowly. 'I have been puzzling where and when I have met him, for his face is quite familiar.'

There was a chorus of exclamations. Mrs Milne's memory was notoriously bad, however, so there was no hope. The General, a distinguished, if bashful figure, took on more mystery; heads were drawn closer, and theories expounded, until

the heads started apart in confusion. Mrs Whin was leaning out of the window, calling in an impatient voice :

'Will you come in to tea?'

This mystery may have made the General more interesting to Mrs Whin as to the world at large. However that might be, she took him under her wing, which meant the Duke's also, when that lazy person was anywhere about, and upon that the whole world was civil.

One dull afternoon, when there were few players and the wind was cold, Mrs Whin's partner took alarm.

'We must finish,' said Mrs Whin.

'But you are cold,' the General said anxiously, coming forward to help in turning up the high coat collar that nearly reached to her ears. His hands touched the small chill fingers that Mrs Whin put up; and the collar was very stiff.

The General did not button up his long military coat, neither did he take up his driver; something seemed to be on his mind.

'I am going south,' he said at last.

'With the swallows?' said Mrs Whin.

'I think they are gone already,' the General answered, gazing abstractedly out to sea.

The wind had blown into the widow's cheek a scarlet to match her coat. She put her head on one side thoughtfully, making believe to look at the hole, and then seemed frightened to find that she had not spoken.

'I have sometimes wondered what brought you all the way up here,' she said hastily. 'It is not as if you had come up to see old friends, or—anything.'

'N—no,' said the General awkwardly. 'No, I—drifted. I will tell you about it some day, when I have courage.'

'You forget,' said she, 'that you are going south.'

There was a queer shake in her voice. It might be cold, but it was not laughter. The General took a stride nearer to her and spoke.

'I am running away,' he said. 'I thought I was hardened to being lonely, with not a soul to care for me but the chums who would say, "Poor chap!" when they read of my death in the English papers. I did not know that I was a fool. Will you say good-bye to me kindly, and let me go?'

'Don't go,' said Mrs Whin. He had taken her hand, and involuntarily her fingers closed over his. There was a little silence while they looked at each other, and Mrs Whin's colour rose.

'I am weather-worn,' said the General.

'So am I,' said Mrs Whin.

Then Dow rose up in alarm, and traitorously signalled to one or two men who were seeking the General high and low, and who promptly came up and interrupted.

'Hi, General, what about our match?'

'Come along. Milne is neither to hold nor bind: come and play that foursome.'

Mrs Whin and the General started, dropped each other's hands, and the General bent his brows.

'I am playing with a lady,' he said.

'The last hole, sir!' Dow put in, running forward to pluck out the flag.

Unwillingly the General sent his ball into it, and the game was over. He paused for an instant, looking at Mrs Whin, and she gave him one glance that was not for the spectators.

'I am going home,' she said.

'May I come up and see you later?' he asked. This unhappy foursome, a great and solemn thing, posted up in the club's arrangements, must override everything, since the others had come to fetch him.

'Come!' Mrs Whin said smiling; and they went their ways.

She stood looking after the men, still smiling tremulously, and then tripped over the hillocks in a hurry. At the pavilion gate she turned round and beamed on Dow, who was stalking behind her glum and silent.

'Run across to the "Gordon Arms" and tell Andrew to bring my cart,' she said, taking the clubs from him, and running in to shut them up in her locker. Dow stopped at the gate and whistled.

'Here you, Sandy,' he said with a lordly air, 'rin round to the "Gordon Arms" for Mrs Whin's dogcart. You'll get a ride back in the cart.'

One of his understudies rushed off obediently, and Dow himself marched up the steps and arrived at the threshold of the pavilion. Mrs Whin was struggling with the keys at her wrist. She was all in a happy flutter.

There was to be a tea-party that afternoon, and there were signs of it in the smoky stove and the baskets against the wall. Mrs Whin was one of the committee; but she would not wait. She must go home. She was eager to get away to sit in her house and think; and afterwards she would lean to the window beyond her chair, and watch for the General coming along the road. She shook her wrist with a laugh, and the keys jingled and were confused: there was no fitting the right one into the lock.

'Could I speak to you, mem?' said Dow. There was something portentous in his air and in the way he spoke, with a painstaking English voice. When he was not upon his dignity he spoke like the other lads, and when he was piloting southern strangers about the green he was apt to exaggerate the vernacular, by way of putting them in mind of the fact that they were out of their own country, and in a despot's hands. This kept them humble. But when he had solemn things to say he put on a mincing English, and this afternoon his speech was pitched in the key appropriate to an awful revelation.

'What is it?' said Mrs Whin.

'An impostor, mem,' said Dow, looking up to her with a groan. 'I have been holding my peace this while, thinking if he pleased to set himself up with the lords and ladies it was not my business to interfere. But I threshed it out with myself this morning, and I think it's my time to speak.'

'Well!' said Mrs Whin amazed.

'Don't take it uncivil, mem,' said Dow, speaking slowly, to pick out his formal English; 'but I was feared this deceiving person was making up to you. And I said to myself, "Tis an awful thing, she so pleasant, and such a lady, and the Duke ready to flog on his knees to her at a wink—that such a deceiving wretch should make her the laugh of the countryside!"'

'Dow?' cried Mrs Whin.

'And I said to myself, "He shan't!"'

Mrs Whin was both mystified and angry. Dow was no ordinary caddie, and he was privileged, as a henchman ought to be—but still—

'Listen yet a wee,' Dow said earnestly, 'and then if you're not obliged—well, I'm telling you for your good. It is this General who comes pottering round and cannot drive a ball straight, and goes for walks like a bat when the sun is down. Oh, mem, you don't know what brings him to these parts!'

'I shall hear from himself,' Mrs Whin said quickly. She could only get in these words edgewise while Dow was pausing for effect. He went on contemptuously:

'From himself? Not you! Excuse me, mem; but I know the circumstances.'

'Dow,' said Mrs Whin severely, 'I cannot have you speaking like this about my friends. You ought to be very much ashamed.'

But Dow the accuser was not abashed.

'What would your friends say, mem—and what would the Duke say—if they knew you were getting familiar with the son of a butcher-body?'

Mrs Whin gave a gasp, and then laughed outright.

'You are out of your mind!' said she.

Dow shook his head in a melancholy fashion, and fixed her look with a pair of solemn eyes.

'Tis Thomson the flesher in old King Street,' he said convincingly. 'The old folks died, and Anderson's bought the shop, but they aye keep the name to hold customers together. I mind it well—that is' (hastily) 'I heard it so often that it was as good as seeing it' myself. Young Archie would not bide and mind the shop. He wanted to shoot people, he said, it was better than sticking sheep—and he ran away for a soldier. And old Ann Thomson would cry, "He'll come back yet; he'll come hame when he's weary o' the wars." But he didna come, and the cornels and folks got shot, and somebody took a fancy to him and shoved him up, and there was no more hoping for him to come home and drive the cart and tie on his apron. Sae the old folks died, and maybe he has come home at last to see if he can light on Ann Thomson's stocking—for she kept aye putting by for Archie, and they couldna find where she put it. Anderson has a look whiles in odd corners, and up the lum; but he hasna got it—and he is come creepin' about the old place, pretending to be as fine as the like of you.'

It was circumstantial indeed. If it should be true?

'I don't believe it,' said Mrs Whin.

'Do ye think I would vex you with a lee?' said Dow, dropping from his state language with relief. 'Oh, mem, it isna spite, and it isna jokin'. I made sure it was truth before I wad trouble you with the story. He keeps himself to himself, and he darena speak; but there's some in the place knows him for Archie Thomson the flesher's son, who ran awa' to the wars.'

Mrs Whin's bright eyes grew dull with a sudden shock. All at once she remembered—yes—driving past that old shop in King Street—stopping to order something that had been forgotten, and seeing the General inside. She had wondered then what a man staying in a hotel could be

doing there, and to her look of surprise he, reddening, had answered, 'Buying collops.'

Mrs Whin was not very bold. She had great ideas about family, and she would run faster from ridicule than from a cow. So she gave a gasp.

'I'm awful vext,' said Dow sympathetically, looking up at her with big round eyes; 'but I thought it was a pity you an' the Duke should be lowerin' yoursels, no' kennin'.'

'He is a brave man and a General,' murmured Mrs Whin in an uncertain voice.

'Ay, he's brave and a General—maybe. They tell me he was aye fightin' with the baker's lad. An' many a time the loaves would lie in the mud, an' the legs o' mutton would need a scrubbin'. The baker's lad aye cam' by the worst,' said Dow.

'Oh!' cried Mrs Whin.

She clenched her hands with a feeling of intense humiliation that brought the tears smarting into her eyes. Her General, her interesting, distinguished General—a butcher's son! How the county would laugh at her if they knew! Oh, it all fitted in so well with the little things she had noticed and paid no attention to at the time. And to think that she had nearly—

'There was a lass at Hendarroch aince, a servant-lass,' said Dow, 'and he used to court her at the back gate when he came wi' the meat. But she wadna wait sae lang. He maun hae been sair putten about to find his auld sweetheart a grannie!'

'That will do,' said Mrs Whin. Her horse was backing against the pavilion fence, and the groom was clucking to keep it still.

Dow moved out of her way, and in another minute she sat up in the driving-seat, took the reins from the groom and started. The high red wheels flashed across the links and vanished; and Dow turned to one of the lesser caddies:

'You see to Sir Thomas this afternoon,' he said in his lordly English, 'I hae got other business.'

Then he stalked off the ground.

The General marched through Mrs Whin's gates cheerfully that afternoon—his head was high, and his gait contented. He rang the bell, and turned to look out over the garden and the late autumn flowers, humming something martial.

'Mrs Whin at home?'

'Not at home.'

He glanced at the servant. There was some mistake.

'I am General Thomson,' he said gruffly, expecting to be instantly let in.

'I know, sir. But my orders are to say that my mistress is not at home.'

There was no mistaking this. The General stared blankly at the man, ready to swallow him in the extremity of his wrath. Mrs Whin had made it plain—so plain that he could only wonder at the ways of a woman and beat a retreat. He had better pack up at once, and take the morning train to the south.

'I will leave my card,' he said, with a grim flicker in his eyes, and he wrote on it 'P.P.C.'

There was a shadow in the corner of the gateway that the General, striding through, did not see. As he passed, however, with chagrin

written on his countenance, the figure rose up and clucked.

Creeping in the lee of some big bushes, Dow arrived at the lowermost windows of the house. There was one where he had seen a stirring of the window-curtains when the General came away. A big laurel bush leaned over against this window, and Dow made himself small, stretching his neck cautiously out of the laurel leaves. Mrs Whin sat in the curtain-shadow, with her face fallen in her hands, crying bitterly in the dusk.

'Losh!' muttered the watcher blankly, as he slid out of the laurel bush, 'an' she might hae the Juke himsel'!

II.

Mrs Whin lay long awake that night wondering at herself. She had been very angry, and she had said she would never speak to the man again; but she had sat at the window to watch his discomfiture, and to see if he looked ashamed, and sitting there she had had to fight with some strange feeling that pushed her to call him back. She clenched her hands and scolded herself till he reached the gate. And then the servant brought in his card, with the 'P.P.C.' written big and unsteadily across it, and she knew that he was gone for good. The door shut softly, and she turned and looked wildly down the drive, and he was out of sight.

'I am a fool!' she said angrily, in a voice that shook.

She had a queer dream that night, when she stopped scolding herself, and trying to shut out the General's reproachful face—that had no right to be reproachful, and still was so.

First she and the General stood alone on the links, and there did not seem to be anybody else in the world, or upon the green. They were playing a match, they two together, against some creature of indiarubber that had a mocking laugh as it bounded up in the air, and the face of Dow, her caddie. It had all the clubs, and they had to play with sticks. The wind blew their balls astale, and the thing was mocking.

'We must win,' said the General, and she pressed to his side, and held on to his coat, putting her cheek against it; but the thing was grinning.

Then suddenly all their acquaintances seemed to come crowding round, and there was scorn in their expression. They were pointing to her and the General, and making faces. The Duke came forward in his mackintosh, and looked amazed, and all Mrs Whin's pet aversions pushed to the front. She looked up. The General was standing up in a cart, wearing a long apron of butcher-blue, and as she looked he leaned over the wheel and cried:

'Will you ride with me?'

They were all laughing shrilly as she started back, and the sound of it was maddening; but she could not withstand the look in the General's eyes as he said again:

'Will you ride with me?'

'Where are you going?' the Duke said, catching her arm, and the mocking chorus behind grew louder. The General stretched out his hand to grip her, and help her up—and then she awakened crying.

It was in the cold gray morning that Mrs Whin came down to the links. The two or three enthusiasts who were there already remarked that her manner was curt and restless. She kept turning half-consciously to the railway cutting where in an hour or so the south express would be whisking past.

Dow, for once, was not on the spot. She missed him with a feeling of relief, and brought out her driver to go round the long course in the hills and hollows by the side of the sea. The sprightliness had gone out of her walk this morning; she followed up her ball with a dragging step, and listlessly played the strokes, not caring.

It was going to rain. The sky was very dull and leaden. There was a ruffle of wind across the sea, and the gulls were all ashore. Yes, it was going to rain, and the smoke would lie in the track of the south express; it would pass in a cloud and leave clouds behind it—and so good-bye!

Lifting her eyes then, Mrs Whin gave a little cry. She was face to face with the General.

He was having a last look round, walking slowly among the familiar places, and he did not see her until she gave that cry—then he moved, standing aside in the withered bracken to let her pass.

He did not speak, but his look was dark with reproach, and she could not bear to see it. The impulse she had had to fight with yesterday grew suddenly all too strong, and broke down her pride.

'Don't go! don't go!' she cried, 'forgive me.'

The General looked doubtful—shy. He did not venture to take the impetuous words for earnest until he saw that her eyes were dim with tears. Then he took her hands.

'You should have told and trusted me,' said Mrs Whin, glancing thus at the dangerous subject. She felt strangely happy in recklessness, like one who has thrown away a burden, and she was ready to dare the world.

'I—I did not like,' said the General, but she interrupted the apology.

'Don't speak about it,' she said with a little shudder, for there was still a stirring of her trampled pride and the prejudice of high family. So the General did not speak.

'They packed up a lunch-basket for me,' Mrs Whin said later. 'I was ashamed to tell the servants I could not eat. Come and have lunch with me in the Hut'—her name for the majestic pavilion—'you will get nothing good, only poor little thin sandwiches and claret!'

'My train is gone,' said the General, eyeing a faint, white puff of smoke.

'Your train?—it is not your train!' Mrs Whin cried quickly. 'Your train is put off for my convenience!' She smiled down to him, tripping up the pavilion steps, and the General followed meekly.

'Will you light the fire?' said she, glancing round for a tablecloth, 'and then I can make some tea. There are matches, and there are sticks—and, I fancy, cinders.'

The General retreated behind the varnished partition that shut off the kitchen corner of the hut from the rest. He knelt down before the grate and struck match after match with the

patience of an old campaigner, but the wood was damp, and the chimney would not draw.

Mrs Whin hung up her coat. It had come on to pour, and the rain was beating against the windows. They would have to stay in here till it cleared a little before they could venture out. She drew out the provisions gingerly. Was there enough for two?

There was a sudden dash in of rain and wind as the door opened and let in Dow.

The wet was trickling along his cheeks and pouring down his coat; he wiped it out of his eyes, shut the door, and spoke.

'They said you were here—you were round the links by your lane this mornin'—I hae been fightin' mysel' a' night up till this very minute, and at last I hae made my mind up, and I hae come to tell.'

'To tell?' Mrs Whin said faintly.

Dow was twisting his wet cap in his hands. Yesterday he had looked virtuous and calm, but to-day his mien was disturbed.

'I didna think you wad take on so,' he said lamely. 'I said to mysel': "She's no a flighty bit lass to fret an' wish hersel' deid, as lasses do when they're crossed. She's a wiselike weedow woman, an' she'll be angry and send him aboot his business—and he'll be offended and gae doon south—an' she'll tak' the Juke." It's awfu' easy to tell a lee, an' pit more to it; but it's awfu' difficult to spoil it an' tell the truth.'

'What do you mean?' said Mrs Whin hastily.

Dow wriggled slightly. Behind them the General was getting the fire alight; he was still stooping over it earnestly, blowing up the flue.

'He's no gane yet,' said Dow. 'He missed the train. I ken that, for I was at the station. I—I couldna bide to think of you, mem, greetin' sae sair.'

He made an effort—feeling keenly the lack of dignity, to take up the mincing English he used upon great occasions.

'I informed you, mem, that the General was the son of a butcher-body of this town—a ne'er-doweel who ran awa' to the wars—and you would na' see him because of it. I told you a falsehood, mem!'

'I should think so!' shouted the General, appearing suddenly. 'You young imp!'

But Dow had fled, bolting into the rain.

'Oh!' said Mrs Whin, covering her face.

'I'll tell you why I came here,' said the General, sitting down beside her. 'I was ashamed to tell you sooner, for it seemed so silly, and I did not want you to laugh at me. But when I was young I came here to stay with a Sandhurst chum, and—and I used to moon round a girl who lived at Hendarroch. It is a poor little story. She married a richer man. Well, I had a queer whim to come here again and see the old place—and I heard she was left a widow. It has changed—and she is changed, for she did not know me. She must have forgotten the very name of her first admirer.'

'Who is she?' asked Mrs Whin eagerly.

'Mrs Milne of Pollaine.'

'Fat Mrs Milne?'

'Fat Mrs Milne. She is changed.'

Then he took her hands and looked seriously down in her brightened face.

'What was this crazy story of that little rascal Dow? You believed it?'

'I believed it,' said Mrs Whin, laying her cheek on his shoulder, 'but'—

'But you would have had me all the same?' said the General.

'I would,' answered Mrs Whin.

And somehow Dow was forgiven.

A DREAM OF HARVEST.

I HAVE not seen for many a year
Or growing corn or farm or grange,
I know not why there should appear
To me a dream so sweet, yet strange.

High in a garret, where St Paul's
Gives me stone-greeting every morn,
Last night I dreamed of linnets' calls,
And long fair upland fields of corn.

I know not what so far away
From pounds and pence my fancy led;
I looked as usual yesterday
Only on lines of black and red!

But yet across the dull dead years
I saw, last seen so long ago,
Again the rustling golden spears
Thick serried waving to and fro.

I heard the farmers' homely yarns,
Their fears of laid unripened grain,
Their hopes of overflowing barns,
Their prophecies of sun and rain.

I saw browned girls with cornflowers braid—
My dream you see had skipped some leaves—
Their curls, faint reapers in rare shade
Asleep, babes cradled on warm sheaves.

I heard the tinkling laden wain
Slow creeping under cloudless skies,
The sickle's well-known sound, the strain
Of harvest filled with tears my eyes.

I saw the tired ears falling caught
By women's arms, in heat of noon:
Then came a change, and there was nought
But shocks and stubble neath the moon.

I'm almost in despair with it,
This wide, wide waste of white and brown;
But wife and child die, if I quit
My worn stool in this stifling town.

JAMES MEW.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
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DR MARTIN'S FURLOUGH.

By A. H. NORWAY.

A STORY IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

I WONDER whether there is any sensation in the whole world so pleasurable as that with which an Anglo-Indian of long service starts upon a two years' leave. A schoolboy's rejoicing when his term breaks up is just as insignificant beside it as the simple feelings of the lad are slight compared with the fuller passions of the man, every one of which is straining in the direction of home with a dash of oriental fervour grafted on our slower English nature. Home always stands in bright colours in an Anglo-Indian's mind; but at the moment when his luggage has been stowed away, when the swarm of masulah boats and catamarans scatters at the first beat of the revolving screw and disappears into the long rollers of the surf, and when the traveller, leaning over the vessel's side, watches the towers and minarets of the land of banishment grow dim and sink lower on the horizon—then is the time when England seems a sort of fairyland, more kind, more hospitable than any other on the earth.

Now I, James Martin, surgeon-major, returning home on furlough after fifteen years, was quite old enough to know that these fancies were illusory; yet I cherished them just as fondly as the rawest lad on board. It is true that as the voyage proceeded I began to question myself, and as I lay in my long deck-chair on the hot, still evenings, remembering what gaps half a generation had made in my list of friends, I was not always quite so sure that to see my old haunts filled with strange faces would give me all the pleasure I had pictured in my leave. These doubts came upon me first at Aden. The Red Sea strengthened them, as it does all other unpleasant impressions; and when I reached Port Said I suppose I had become a little morbid, for if it had not been for

the fear of looking so confoundedly absurd, I was quite in the mood to change steamers and go back to my comfortable bungalow and my familiar cronies at Secunderabad.

After all, it is a rather desolate thing to come home from long service knowing that there will be no kind face to meet one at the docks, no friendly hearth garnished for one with a welcome worth crossing the world to seek. It was chilling to the spirits, especially in the midst of all the chatter about happy meetings which was going on around me; and I was therefore doubly pleased when the steward came up to me at Malta and handed me a letter which had just been brought on board from my old friend Champneys.

Really, I sometimes think the friendships which India cements are worth the banishment. I had not seen Champneys for five years, and had heard of him only once. Yet he wrote to me now saying he had seen my leave gazetted in the *Homeward Mail*, that his house was just as much at my service as my bungalow had been at his on certain occasions which he specified; and he concluded by saying, 'I shall be in town for a few days about the 16th; so I propose to meet the *Ganges*. That will insure your breaking any other plans you may have made; and we will go down to Oatley together.'

I was glad enough to be taken possession of in this cheery, confident manner; and there was really nothing to prevent me from going off with Champneys as soon as he proposed, for my only near relation was a sister whom I had left in India; while as for my cousins in Scotland it would be quite time to think of them when they showed signs of remembering me—which had not happened yet. So, after four splendid days in

town, during which Champneys and I were more like two schoolboys than the sober fogies we were credited with being, we put ourselves into the train at Paddington and ran down into Somersetshire, where my friend had established himself in a charming house on the first slopes of the Quantock Hills.

I received a most cordial welcome, for Mrs Champneys was a friend almost older than her husband—a woman indeed of more real charm and kindness than any other I had then been privileged to meet. Indeed, if it had not been quite obvious that she and Champneys— But what object is there in going back so far? It is enough that we have always been the best of friends, and that she came to meet me with outstretched hands.

‘Welcome, welcome, from beyond the seas,’ she cried, grasping my hand in both of hers. ‘Oh, John and I have wearied for your coming home on leave! Why have you not written to us in all these years?’

I might have replied that if few letters had passed in one direction, fewer still had travelled in the other. But I am not one of those who hold that friendship feeds on letters; and indeed there was too much genuine kindness in my hostess’s manner to dispose me to attempt an answer in any other than the same spirit.

‘Ah, you have still your flattering tongue,’ she said, interrupting me as I faltered out my thanks. ‘Don’t make us feel as if we had lost the Indian standard of hospitality. And who should be more at home than you in our house? Come in and have tea. Wilkins will see to all your things. John, some one is waiting to see you about the fencing.’

Talking all the time, she ushered me into a spacious library, where tea was laid in a deep bow-window, outside which a crimson and scarlet sunset was flaming over high plantations. The room was almost dusk, and I thought at first that it was empty. But in a moment more a lady rose from a lounge in the window, and came to meet us.

‘This is my half-sister, Duance Merriman,’ Mrs Champneys explained, ‘whose sole grievance in life it is that she was born too late, and so lost the chance of seeing India before my father retired.’

‘Is that a hardship?’ I asked, as Miss Merriman and I shook hands. ‘Now I should have called it a piece of good fortune. Why should India take the gloss off another life?’

‘You are exactly like all the rest, Dr Martin,’ the young lady answered rather scornfully; ‘you wish to arouse sympathy for what you call your banishment by representing that it is grievous to be borne. But I have known too many Anglo-Indians to be deceived. I am very well aware that your prison-house is much pleasanter than most people’s freedom.’

‘And so it may be, looking at it from a lady’s point of view; but we men are at a discount out there, you know, Miss Merriman, and our merits are not acknowledged as yours would be if you honoured our shores.’

‘Flatterer,’ laughed the girl, as she handed me my teacup. ‘But talking of merits, if you only knew how yours had been discussed in this house during the last week. You are on a lofty

pinnacle, Dr Martin. It will need all your efforts to maintain yourself there.’

At this point my hostess came to my rescue. ‘Dr Martin will maintain himself on his pinnacle without any effort whatever, Duance. But it can’t be very amusing for him to talk about his own qualities; suppose you tell him of the guests we are expecting, and of the stag-hunt to-morrow.’

‘Are you expecting a full house?’ I asked.

‘Not very full; but we shall not be alone for some weeks after to-day.’

Then followed a short description of the people who were to form our house-party; the usual mixture of old and young folk, none of whom aroused any particular interest in my mind except one man, a Major Hunter of the Engineers, concerning whom I fancied I detected some difference of tone in the accounts given by the two ladies. If so, however, the difference was slight; and we soon diverged into conversation about the stag-hounds, which Miss Merriman told me, with quickened interest, came up from Exford for a week’s hunting in the Quantocks each November. I was a trifle piqued by the non-chalance of her manner in receiving me; and exerted myself so much the more to draw her into pleasant conversation. This was not very difficult, since she was an enthusiast about sport. I brought out my best stories with just such a twang of the long-bow as every story-teller who respects himself must remember to impart even to his most veracious narratives; and succeeded in interesting her so well that when Champneys returned, having settled all about his fences, and proposed a cheroot and a stroll round the plantations before dinner, she got up with a pettish exclamation, and saying, ‘I do wish your fence had been a trifle longer, John,’ sailed out of the room in real or affected indignation.

‘You will like Hunter,’ Champneys observed as we strolled through the stable-yard; ‘he is a capital fellow—a good shot and an excellent companion.’

‘I seem to remember something about him,’ I said, ‘yet I can’t quite place him. Has he been in India?’

‘Only for a few months, on a sporting expedition up in Cashmere, I fancy. It is hardly likely that you can have met him.’

‘Probably not,’ I said. ‘I gathered from what Mrs Champneys said that he is often with you.’

‘Why, yes,’ Champneys answered with a slight laugh. ‘He has his reasons for coming here tolerably frequently. In fact— But there, I must not let my tongue run into indiscretions.’

‘It would be most improper to do so,’ I replied, ‘and it is moreover perfectly unnecessary, since I quite understand what you mean to convey.’

‘There is no engagement, however,’ Champneys said; and there the conversation dropped.

I do not know what there was in it which could reasonably displease me. Yet I was in a bad humour as I dressed for dinner; and throughout the evening I found my thoughts constantly reverting to the absent Hunter with a growing desire that his leave might be refused or that some melancholy accident might keep him from breaking up, as I felt he would, our pleasant society. He was an excellent talker it appeared, a most resourceful man in amusing people on dull days in a country house—in short he was all

that my long bachelor life had unfitted me to become ; and though I exerted myself with a fair measure of success on this my first evening of home life, I could not disguise from myself that my social arts were sadly out of date.

It was otherwise, however, on the following morning, when, mounted on a strong roan mare, I rode up into the Quantocks side by side with Miss Merriman, while Champneys jogged along behind. If drawing-rooms had become unfamiliar to me in fifteen years, the saddle and the hunting-field were my chosen ground, and once on horseback I feared comparison with nobody. The meet was on almost the highest point of the range, among bare hilltops clothed only with ling and heather, but intersected at every point by deep combs, on the sides of which the fern grew deep, and where there was scrub far more than enough to hide a couching deer. There was the usual crowd of sightseers in vehicles of every imaginable kind ; gigs, farmers' carts, with a fair number of ladies who had braved the thick morning mist in the hope of seeing a gallant start. From all these on-lookers Miss Merriman held herself aloof, speaking only to a few friends, and seizing every opportunity of quitting the group on pretence of keeping a close watch on the operations of the huntsman, who, with his pack of tufters, was about to beat the scrub on the first slopes of a comb some short distance off.

'There's plenty of time,' Champneys called out to us from where he sat on his gray horse, the centre of a jovial party. 'They'll have to go a good way down before they start anything.'

But Miss Merriman shook her head a little disdainfully, and moved off to a knoll which commanded the whole extent of the comb. When she reached it she turned to me, seeing that I had followed her, and said :

'See, the sun is shooting through the mist already. I can't understand, Dr Martin, why when people come out to hunt they must always begin with such a quantity of gossip.'

I had not time to answer her ; for at that moment, as I watched the scarlet coats going to and fro, and the dogs nosing into every clump, but a short way below us, suddenly, without the least warning, the antlered head of a magnificent stag rose out of the covert, and in another moment the beast was cantering grandly away along the hillside, knowing full well that the time of his greatest peril was not yet, and that he had an easy start before the tufters could be recalled and the pack put on him. Instantly the hillside, so still a moment earlier, was in a roar of cheerful sound. The very turf seemed to shake beneath the thud of horses galloping ; and as the stag disappeared round the shoulder of the hill I set my horse to my first gallop on the breezy hills of home.

We had ridden perhaps half a mile along the ridge before I thought of Champneys ; and, looking back over my shoulder I saw him at some distance behind, striving to force his horse through a stretch of very broken ground into which he had blundered in his haste, taking what he thought to be a better route. I waved my whip to him in derision, and he shouted back what sounded like profanity ; but I had no time to ponder over what it could have been, for the pace was growing, and the nature of the ground

demanding care. I glanced at Miss Merriman. She was riding splendidly, her horse under perfect control, her lips tight-set, and her eyes flashing with excitement. The mist was scattering, and there lay before us a view as glorious as can be seen in these islands—stretching far away over the wide, flat plain towards Clevedon, with the sea and the Welsh hills beyond ; while the keen salt air rushed in our faces, and every stride of the horses brought a fresh throb of exhilaration and delight.

So we rode for perhaps half-an-hour, when the stag plunged downwards into a valley, and, crossing a little stream in the bottom, took to the woods upon the farther slope. I was on the point of riding down when Miss Merriman checked me.

'If you will let me advise you, you will not go down,' she said. 'Come with me. I know this country well.'

She evidently did ; and I followed her without demur along the ridge till she drew up at a point somewhat above the wood, though a little to the right.

'Here or hereabouts he will come out,' she said confidently ; 'but he will lurk in the wood until he can stay there no longer, so I propose to eat my sandwiches, and I should advise you to do the same.'

Far below us, in the hollow, men were riding up and down the stream, shouting and perplexing each other with the greatest energy. 'I'm afraid,' said Miss Merriman, 'that their horses will be blown before the hard work of the run begins.' And events proved her right ; for the sandwiches were not yet done when the stag burst out of the thickets of ground-oak not a hundred yards from where we had posted ourselves, and broke away along the slope, the whole pack in full cry after him.

Then followed one of the hardest and longest runs in which I have ever taken part ; and, as one such day is in its outward features not unlike another, when the hard riding begins, I will only say that the whole chase swept gradually down out of the hills, the stag heading for the sea ; and that late in the afternoon we drew rein upon the sand. The stag was swimming out a hundred yards from shore, his sobbing breath plainly audible to us. The dogs ran fretting and baying up and down the line of surf. One or two swam out a little way, but swam back whining. At a little distance the huntsman was talking to some fishermen. Miss Merriman caught at my bridle.

'They are getting out a boat,' she said. 'I can't bear to see this butchery. The sport is over. Let us go before the poor brute is slaughtered.'

'Most willingly,' I said. 'But where are we ? We must be many miles from home.'

'Not so many as you think,' she answered. 'But first let us get out of sight of the shore. You see we have shaken off John.'

'I lost him more than an hour ago,' I said. 'Really you must allow me to compliment you on your riding.'

'Certainly, if it gives you any pleasure,' she replied. 'But why should you ? One does not congratulate a man who happens to be at home on horseback. One takes it as a matter of course. And now let me tell you that we have not to

ride back over the hills. There is a road through the valley which will bring us home comfortably in two hours.'

'It is as well,' I said, 'for though we are well mounted, one should not treat one's horse as if his muscles were of steel.' Thereupon we fell into the pleasantest of talk; for nothing advances intimacy so fast as comradeship on such a day as we had spent. There was about my companion a certain simplicity of manner which I have often noticed in country-bred girls, and which I believe to be bred of a love of field-sports and of much living in the open air. We talked like two old friends. The ride was delightful, I think, to both; and for my part I plead guilty to a muttered malediction when my companion cried, as we rode up the avenue of Oatley, 'There is Major Hunter talking to John upon the steps.' It may have been a mere fancy, but I thought her face also fell. At any rate, welcome or not, there he was; and a moment later we were shaking hands and receiving Champney's good-natured congratulations on our luck in seeing the thing through, whereas he had been obliged to fall out by the lameness of his horse. There was a little chaff about the inconsistent nature of people who went out to see a stag killed, but could not bear to see it done after all; and then I was carried off to the stables to give my opinion about the gallant gray, while Hunter went into the house with the ladies.

BELGIUM FOR THE BRITISHER.

By M. CORBET-SEYMOUR, Bruges.

BRUSSELS.

LANDING at Ostend and availing himself of the mail-train timed to convey him wheresoever he wills, the Englishman will arrive in less than three hours in the bright, modernised, and very charming city of Brussels. 'A little Paris' it is sometimes called; but, knowing both capitals pretty thoroughly as a resident, I have never been able to trace a strong likeness between them. Even the French spoken in Brussels is not precisely that spoken in Paris; and to the visitor from Great Britain the Belgian city is more hospitable, more home-like than the capital of France. Either as passing guest or settled resident he may be very happy at a moderate cost; and many who come for a month stay for a year, while those who meditate a year's visit will frequently remain for a lifetime.

The hotels are well-nigh innumerable. Those in the upper town are more expensive than those in the more central streets, the *table d'hôte* varying from three and a half to six francs, and other prices corresponding. There are *pensions de famille* in plenty; the usual charge is five francs per diem for each visitor, and wine the only extra. There are also furnished rooms or sets of rooms to be had by the week or by the month, and furnished houses in plenty. The prices for all are rarely higher in Brussels than in Bruges, though of course offering modern improvements and advantages.

The origin of Brussels dates back to the sixth century, if we may credit the old legend which tells of St Géry, bishop of Cambrai, coming to

preach Christianity to the people in the land of heather and marshes which is now known as Belgium. The holy man, we read, built a chapel upon the small island formed by the two branches of the river Senne; humble cabins began to be erected round about, and this was the cradle of the present beautiful city. The tourist will be struck with the shops of the Montagne de la Cour, and of the Galeries Saint Hubert, some of which exhibit the exquisite and costly lace that forms the chief industry of the country. He will stand gazing at the splendid exterior of the church of St Gudule, and then pass within to admire its magnificent stained-glass windows and wood-carving. He will visit the Royal Library, rich in volumes, engravings, coins, and medals, and pass to the upper floor to see the masterpieces of old painters, Rubens, Matsys, and others—to which are added the best efforts of the modern school of art. He will walk in the Park and listen to the music of the Guides; he will drive in the extensive Bois de la Cambre. And then he will spend his evenings at one of the theatres, or at the opera-house of the Monnaie, and finally declare that the sights and the amusements of Brussels are too many for a short stay—it will be necessary to come back again and yet again if he would see all that is to be seen, and hear all that ought to be heard.

As a matter of course, this, the Exposition year, will not be the moment to see Brussels in its normal condition, nor to realise how moderate are the expenses of the resident. But we will imagine Paterfamilias arriving in the city under ordinary conditions. If he has made up his mind to so long a stay as to render the removal of his furniture from England advisable, Messrs Hudson will take it in hand, nor will he have reason to complain of so much as a glass being broken. But more probably he will wish for an unfurnished house in the quarter known as Ixelles, which is greatly favoured by the British. Depending upon the number of rooms and somewhat also upon the position, he will find what he wants for forty or fifty pounds per annum. He can purchase on hire second-hand furniture more advantageously than in any other Belgian town; indeed, people from the provinces often take a trip to Brussels specially for this purpose. The furnished house is the remaining possibility, at six to ten pounds per month; the price varying according to size and other things.

There is a first-class school for boys, both elder and younger, known as St Bernard's. There are boarding and day schools for girls conducted by English, French, or Belgian ladies, as may be preferred. There are capital art-studios, where lessons in painting and drawing are given for very moderate fees. And for music and singing the opportunities are so numerous and varied that the only difficulty will be to select who shall teach your sons and daughters.

The 'Old English Bank,' for changing money, the two English churches, an English library and reading-room, an English Club, a Cricket and Lawn-tennis Club all combine to make the newly-arrived Britisher feel 'at home away from home.' And there is a large English colony, the members of which vie with each other in hospitable entertainments and in organising various amusements. For the Belgian, the Brussels

season extends from November to Easter, at which time he betakes himself to his country-house. But for the British, the Belgian capital is never more charming than during the spring and summer months, when concerts in the open air are the chief attraction of the long evenings.

That will be the season also for excursions in the neighbourhood, first of which we must place Waterloo, a distance of fifteen and a half kilometres from Brussels, reached by a coach which starts somewhere about nine in the morning, and returns to the city in time for six o'clock dinner.

If preferred, the little journey can be made by rail to Braine-l'Alleud, which is within twenty minutes of the battlefield.

Then there is Tervuren and its beautiful park, the residence of Princess Charlotte (widow of the unfortunate Maximilian of Mexico) until the disastrous fire of 1879, when the building was totally destroyed.

Boitsfort is a favourite ride or drive; and besides its pretty modern residences it possesses one which is a curiosity, because it has been constructed in the style of Flemish Renaissance, as a specimen of the magnificence of the dwellings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The furnishing of the interior, even to the smallest detail, carries out the idea and shows what was the taste of those old times. By the courtesy of the owner, strangers find very little difficulty in obtaining permission to inspect it thoroughly. Groenendaël is also a favourite excursion; also Beersel, where are the ruins of the old castle belonging to the D'Arenberg family.

Animal lovers must not omit a visit to the House for Dogs at Maelen Haren. It is a large garden situated in the middle of fields, and encircled by high walls, against which the seven hundred dwellings are built. Each dwelling has two divisions; the one open to the air, where food and water are supplied to the four-footed inmate, the other roofed in and warmed, serving for his living and sleeping apartment. Every sort and condition of dog may be found in the Home—small, large, young, old. Some are poor lost 'strays'; others, perhaps, are sent there by some owner who has ceased to care for his faithful companion; others again have toiled hard (under the wretched system of driving dogs in carts which still exists in Belgium), and find at Haren a place of rest for the evening time of life. All are welcome; all are well fed and cared for; and the Home is under admirable supervision. After a fortnight's residence, a dog becomes the property of the managers. But he is never sold except on receipt of a written agreement to treat him well and never to give him up for purposes of vivisection. There is an infirmary for the sick, and also a department where dogs are received 'en pension' during the absence of their owners.

Laeken is the usual residence of the King and Queen of the Belgians, the palace in Brussels being only used on special occasions. On this account it is but seldom that visitors can be admitted, and there is nothing very remarkable about the interior. So much for the amusements of spring and summer.

During the winter, when all the fashionables are in residence, there are several court balls for

those who have the *entrée* of the highest society. There are informal dances and private theatricals for every one; four concerts of the Grande Harmonic; four concerts given by the Conservatoire; four—or sometimes six—concerts at the opera-house.

All this concerns either the pleasure-seeker or the family where there are young people, who will need a blending of instruction and amusement.

The quiet student and the lover of antiquity need not feel hopelessly out of his element in the lively little city. For such there is occupation for many a day in the Museum of the Porte de Hal, or in the Museum of Natural History. He will be delighted with the hôtel-de-ville on the Grande Place, and the other buildings which remain as specimens of the rich architecture of the Middle Ages, and with the old frescoes of the church of the Sablon.

For young and old, for studious or gay, there is plenty to see and plenty to do in Brussels. Strange to say, it is often considered but as a halting-place on the way to Germany, and a vast number of people ignore its claims to be ranked high on the list of cities where the Briton may be comfortably and hospitably entertained when economical reasons drive him, for a longer or shorter period, away from home.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

By FRED WHISHAW.

CHAPTER VII.

Alexander Philipof returned to his lodging with mixed feelings. He had received at Olga's hands what must be described as 'a knock-down blow.' It was a matter of surprise to him, as he now strode home, that his heart was not broken. It was not broken; on the contrary, able now to face the question honestly, which—while still on his way to see Olga—had been impossible, he felt bound to admit, in the secret recesses of his soul, that in some respects matters were better as they were. On considering the entire question, he was astonished to discover that the prospect of marrying Olga had not been, of late, the most ardently desired gift that the future held in store for him. During the past year of separation from her, he had more than once been conscious of a distressing suspicion that, fond as he was of the girl in one way, he was scarcely sufficiently attached to her in another. It was a suspicion to which he had never offered a moment's hospitality, when its presence was realised; and as for making Olga a party to his fears, he would never have dreamed of such a thing. Olga should never be vexed by so foolish a suspicion of weakness. Probably every lover misdoubted at times—with in his soul—the worthiness of his devotion. Now that he dared face the question, however, he recognised that the prospect of his marriage had been an actual incubus, and that the abstract fact of his escape from the necessity to marry Olga was a distinct gain and relief to him.

Nevertheless—such is the inexplicable nature of mankind!—he felt sore and aggrieved. This hussar, Dostoief, who had profited by the mistake in some despatch, would have another excuse—a

very poor one, but enough for him—for affecting an air of superiority. Philipof had been, in a way, cut out by him. At this moment he almost wished that Dostoief had really committed the fraud of which he, at the first instant, had half-suspected him; for then Sasha could have called him out and squared this affair to his liking. It was not that Dostoief was a bad match for his cousin and ward; on the contrary, his prospects were most brilliant as the Tsar's companion and *aide-de-camp*, and he was, besides, a rich man. Olga would occupy a far better position as Dostoief's wife than she would have enjoyed as his own. But that Dostoief should have married his betrothed, even though he had done so in the full belief that Sasha was dead and buried, was a kind of affront; the more difficult to bear because unpunishable. Lastly, though Philipof now knew very well that he had not really wished to marry his cousin, or indeed to marry any one, and must have sacrificed himself for the sake of Olga's love for him, which he could not adequately return, yet, strangely enough, he had never felt so tenderly towards the girl as at this moment. There was not much danger of his falling in love with her, however, he concluded; for if he had wearied of her as his own betrothed, he would not be likely to be attracted by her now that she was the wife of another. Her feelings for himself were a different matter; and Philipof, being an honest and chivalrous person, and averse to the idea of tampering with another man's property, then and there decided that if he found, after a visit or two to Olga, that his cousin showed signs of retaining her old feelings for him—why, he must, to his regret, leave her severely alone. His functions as guardian might properly lapse now that she possessed a natural protector of her own. As her cousin, he need not see her often. The whole thing was in a nutshell: he would befriend Olga if she needed him—which was unlikely—and if all went well with her, he would visit the house very rarely, and that when he would have the less chance of meeting Dostoief, whose marriage was an offence to him whatever else it might be, and whom he did not desire to see oftener than was absolutely necessary.

Full of his resolve to act up to these conclusions, Philipof remained absent from Olga, after his first visit, for forty-eight hours. Then he felt that the girl might deem it unkind if he stayed away any longer, and he visited her again.

Olga was still busy over the little garments she worked at. She changed colour when Sasha appeared, but received him with a genial smile of welcome.

'I am so glad you have come, dear Sasha,' she said, 'for I wished to explain that I was taken by surprise the other day, and spoke and acted like a fool. I shall always love you, you know, my dear; it is useless to disguise that fact; it is impossible to forget what is past and gone; but I love my husband also—you would not have it otherwise?'

'God forbid!' said Sasha. 'Love him all you can, Olga; it is your duty!'

'Thank you, my brave Sasha! I think I shall love him still better, perhaps, one day. There is—this, you know?' (she held up the little sock with a plaintive smile); 'I think it will bring us to-

gether; and, meanwhile, God will help both you and me to be brave and—and honourable. I shall never tell you after this day that I love you the best, Sasha; and, perhaps, after a while, it will no longer be the case; and you—you will try also to accept the trial that has been sent to us to bear.'

'I am bearing it, Olga; we will say no more about it!' said Philipof, with an uncomfortable feeling that this trial had fallen lightest upon the stronger shoulders.

Then Olga cried a little, dried her tears, crossed herself, sighed, and started off with a long disquisition upon all that had happened to bring about the present state of affairs, a recital which certainly proved that she had held out to the best of her ability against the combined attacks of Dostoief and Matrona. Afterwards she waxed eloquent on the subject of Dostoief's prospects, and told many interesting facts as to her husband's marvellous advancement and his important position about the person of the young Tsar, who, it appeared, was never satisfied unless Dostoief were within hail, and could do nothing and go nowhere without his new favourite. All this certainly sounded promising enough, but a question which Sasha put to his cousin revealed a state of things which threw a new light on the whole matter. Olga was telling, with heightened colour and evident satisfaction, of her husband's greatness.

'But how about his home life?' asked Sasha. 'If he is always with the Tsar, and even sleeps in the palace several nights every week, you must see rather little of him.'

'I do rather,' said Olga, smiling ruefully. 'I see him nearly every day, though, if only for a little while.'

'Nearly every day,' Sasha repeated slowly. 'Do you mean to say, Olga, that you, who have only been married a few months, don't see your husband every day, and he living in the same town?'

'Not quite every day!' said Olga, blushing; 'but he comes when he can. We both understand that, placed as he is, we must put up with some separation for the sake of his prospects. I don't mind so much now that you are here,' she ended ingenuously.

'Oh, but I can't come very often, you know, now, Olga; it's different, don't you see. You must not rely upon having me constantly by you, as before; it would not be right.'

'Can't we be brother and sister?' she asked. 'We have agreed that we are not going to talk about love. I think I must see you every day, Sasha; and especially because Vladimir is so often absent from home. You will come every day, won't you?'

'Oh no, Olga, certainly not!' said Sasha.

Yet he did come every day, as it happened, for the idea of leaving her to knit her little socks in solitude was distasteful to him, and his company was so obviously a comfort to her. But though he was at the house for the greater part of every day, yet it was a week before he met Dostoief there. The hussar had heard of his return 'from the grave,' and now expressed himself delighted to find that he had a new cousin alive instead of beneath the sod. As for his marriage to the girl who had been Sasha's betrothed, he never referred

to that awkward subject, but ignored it altogether, as though he had never known of Philipof's intention to marry his cousin. Dostoeief talked of the war a little, and a great deal about the Tsar and the court, from which topic, once it was broached, his conversation did not afterwards stray. The Emperor was the be-all and end-all of every thought in his head, and Dostoeief made no secret of his infatuation.

During the course of the conversation Sasha mentioned his own disgust in consequence of the injustice meted out to the unfortunate Okhotsk regiment, but on this subject the hussar had little to say, and that not over-pleasant to listen to.

'The Okhotsk regiment—confound it!' he said. 'I forgot you belonged to that terrible corps. There's no injustice there, my dear man; you forget his Majesty was present as Grand Duke at Inkermann, and saw it all for himself! The regiment behaved disgracefully—nothing personal, of course; you were wounded, I know, and could not help it, but the fellows ran like sheep. I have heard his Majesty describe it more than once as a disgrace to the Russian arms. If you'll take my advice, you'll get out of the Okhotsk and into a better corps. I'll mention your case to his Majesty, if you like. His Majesty would strain a point to oblige me.' But Sasha declined the honour of having his case brought before the notice of the Emperor. He did not care to be singled out from his brother officers, he said, who were all as good as he, and as good—he ventured to believe—as those of any other regiment of his Majesty, not excepting the Red Hussars. If two years' fighting for the Tsar merited nothing better than insults from the Tsar, it was useless to attempt to mend matters by wearing another uniform; he would be no better servant of the Tsar for changing his coat and trousers!

This was a foolish speech, and Sasha must have been very angry to make it. Dostoeief looked surprised for a moment, then shrugged his shoulders.

'As you will!' he said. 'I would arrange it for you if you liked—but if you prefer to remain a member of a submerged regiment—do so! Perhaps I shall have the opportunity to do you a good turn with his Majesty whether you desire it or no!'

'For heaven's sake play your own game with his Majesty, but leave me alone,' said Sasha angrily. 'I am quite capable of taking care of myself, and wish for no favours from the son of that bullying autocrat, Nicholai Pavlitch. You may have forgotten his rudeness to me on a certain occasion—but I have not.'

'Well, well,' laughed Dostoeief, 'don't be too hard upon crowned heads. It would be a pity indeed if his Majesty the Tsar and Alexander Philipof were to fall out, and all about so trifling a matter as the running away of the Okhotsk regiment!'

'Tsars may make enemies just as easily as flippant hussars,' said Sasha, 'and it is a foolish act in a conceited courtier to make them for him.'

'And a mouse may show its teeth at an elephant,' Dostoeief laughed, 'if it pleases; come Sasha, do not let us quarrel—we are too old friends for that—relatives now, as well. You'd better let me speak to the Tsar about you—I mean

it well! It is better that Olga should not be obliged to own relationship with the officer of a degraded regiment, and I myself'—

'Listen here, Dostoeief,' said Sasha grimly; 'no more about the Okhotsk; I tell you candidly that while I am a member of the regiment—and I intend to hold to it—I shall defend its honour and allow no one—not even the Tsar's *aide-de-camp*—to speak slightly of it. Now you understand me—so let us have no more talk of Tsar's favours and degraded regiments; you may truckle to your Tsar and I shall mind my own business; and as for Olga—since she has married you, thanks to a mistake—I shall expect you to take care of her and not neglect her; her connection with an officer in the Okhotsk regiment will not distress her. As for your own feelings, you may think what you like on the subject.'

And so these new-made cousins parted, after their first meeting as relatives, under a distinct understanding. Olga had retired to bed before the conversation became heated, which was just as well for her peace of mind; and she remained consequently unaware that the prospect of a family quarrel had been very bright indeed at one moment of the evening!

ON THE COLLECTING OF AUTOGRAPHS.

HAD not the penny-post been established it could not have been; only the far-seeing mind of Rowland Hill made it possible; and I have sometimes thought that he would have paused could he have realised the suffering that would be indirectly caused by him.

Money-lenders' circulars and advertisements make capital material with which to light fires; begging-letters, when genuine, are either an appeal from the destitute or a misdirected endeavour to do good; but what is to be done with letters which are merely requests for one's autographs?

I remember that I felt rather flattered by the first dozen or so of the curiously worded documents that I received begging me to sign my name, and enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope.

Well! my only excuse is that I was young, and that it is a long time ago; and I think that all I have since suffered at the hands of the autograph hunter has been a heavy retribution for what was, after all, only boyish vanity. I once compared notes with a celebrated actress, who, unknown to the public, does an enormous amount of charitable work in London; she gives both money and time ungrudgingly whenever she sees the chance of doing good; and for an actress to give her time means an amount of self-sacrifice that the public can scarcely enter into.

It was a bitterly cold day in November, and I found my friend sitting close by the fire, busily writing.

'Wait just one moment,' she said; 'I have only two more to do.'

As she spoke she signed her name rapidly, and then, taking a fresh sheet of paper, repeated the process.

'There! I've done them all; what a blessing,' she exclaimed.

'Autographs, I suppose,' I answered.

'Yes. I only do them, as a rule, once a week; but this afternoon I was not very busy, and I thought I would get them done with.'

I took up some of the half-sheets of paper, and looked at them: most of them had only the words 'Yours truly,' followed by the name; but some of them bore quotations from various poets, especially from Shakespeare.

'Why have you written these?' I asked.

'Oh! these are what I call my two-and-six-pennies,' was the reply.

Then, seeing that I looked mystified, my friend continued:

'Have you not seen it stated in the papers lately that Miss —, being so troubled by constant applications for her autograph, has made a rule not to send it unless a shilling's worth of stamps be enclosed for the — Hospital?'

'Why, you will be as good as an annuity to them.'

'I hope I may be able to collect a nice little sum in a year; but you see, I make any one give a shilling just for my autograph; but I get half a crown each for those with quotations as well as my name.'

'Who chooses the passages?' I asked.

The actress laughed. 'Those who ask for them, of course. Just look at them.'

I did look, and found that a great many were from *Romeo and Juliet*, one or two from *Othello*, and several from *As You Like It*. There were ten begging for lines from Browning, and about a dozen asking for extracts from Tennyson.

I was so impressed by what Miss — told me, that I made some inquiries, and found that autograph-hunting is a regular trade.

As soon as a man or a woman becomes celebrated from any cause, they receive a letter, usually signed with a woman's name, asking for their signature. If a favourable answer is returned and the autograph sent, it is then taken to a dealer and sold. There are several people who make a good living by this business. Writing under various names, and from different addresses, one man may manage to obtain five or six signatures from the same person.

Then there is the genuine autograph-hunter; he openly avows that he writes to every one. One of these human fiends unblushingly informed me that, as a rule, you could safely reckon on getting about one-third of all you applied for.

Those who really take a genuine and sensible interest in autographs do not value them merely on account of their rarity, but for the interest attaching to them. On the other hand, the dealers and those who supply them view each signature and document purely from its money value. These men know the market, and they can tell you the current price of any autograph.

I asked one of them what was the price of a letter from Mr Gladstone. He shook his head regretfully. 'They don't fetch much; he's too fond of postcards; it is a grand chance thrown away. Why, if he'd been careful, like Tennyson, they might have made ten pounds each,' was the reply.

I mentioned two or three other well-known people, and he quoted their prices at once; at

length I asked how Mr Ruskin's autograph sold. He sighed, 'He's dear, for a living one, very. I've had five or six orders come in for him within this last week, and I cannot execute them all; I've had to ask for time.'

'What class do you sell the most of?' I inquired.

'Oh! theatrical people; there is a steady demand for them always.'

'Irving and Ellen Terry sell well, I suppose?'

'Yes. I get more orders for them than for any one else; but there is a great run on Mrs Kendal and Sarah Bernhardt; and you would be astonished if you knew how often I am asked for Toole.'

'Do you do much with artists?' I asked.

'No, not much,' he replied. 'Of course we book a few orders. I had two this morning; one man, a regular customer, wants Noel Paton, and the other one a Millais. We sell more of him than of any of them, but we turn over Alma Tademas fairly well, and there is a slow but steady sale for Leightons. We do a certain amount in Burne Jones and Whistler; but the trade in artists is not brisk—not what I should like to see it, nor what they have a right to expect.'

I asked him what he did in the musical world, and he owned that there things looked brighter. 'We do a good deal in Patti; yes, I may say we do really well in them; Joachim sells surely, if a trifle slowly; and there is a brisk demand for Albanis. Norman Neruda has a steady value, and we do a very fair thing in Antoinette Sterlings.'

In reply to some further questions my informant told me that when Gilbert and Sullivan were working together the demand for those in the caste at the Savoy was very great.

'I've had as many as ten separate orders in a morning for all the principal parts.'

I asked who sold best in the world of literature, and he said novelists as a rule.

'But,' he added, 'they vary so. Now at one time I did a great trade in William Blacks, but there is not such a demand for him now. I do a fair business in Miss Braddons; she is always on demand, and the sale for her is steady. Lately there has been a very good thing to be made with Rudyard Kiplings; and there is a fair demand for Barrie; I send a good many of them to Scotland.'

I inquired whether he was ever asked for George Meredith's autograph.

'Well, yes, I'm asked for it now and again; the really serious collectors go in for it; but it is not, so to speak, quotable, not on the market in a regular way. You seem interested in this sort of thing,' he added.

I said that I was, and he then went on to explain that there were some couple of dozen people in England who went in for autographs seriously and systematically. 'All the dealers know them; there are people on my books now to whom I send a monthly list of my stock, not the catalogue for the general public; these additions to my list only go into that when looked over by my regular customers, who order what they want, and also tell me to look out for special things for them. Long before a man becomes in great demand these collectors have secured him, not a mere autograph, but a letter; often a very interesting one. There is one of my customers

who has three huge folios, like large atlases, full of autographs. I forget the date of the earliest, but I know he has Christopher Columbus. He has some Cromwells, most of them printed by Carlyle; his letters are not very commonly to be met with, but his mere autograph is not very valuable; but the man I am speaking of has got a signature of Cromwell's father, a wonderfully valuable thing. There is only one other now known, so far as I am aware, but of course it may turn up any day.'

'I did not know any letters from the Protector's father existed,' I said.

'No! How should you know, unless by chance? But, you see, it is my business to have this sort of information. I only wish,' he added, 'that a few of Shakespeare's would turn up; he *must* have written letters, like any one else, if only one could have been preserved. I am not exaggerating when I say that if I could put on the market a genuine, undoubted letter of his, I could get what I like for it. I should not expect to make less than four thousand pounds by it, and perhaps more. I would not take less than fifteen hundred for his mere signature.'

'I suppose if these were to come to light they would go to America?' I said.

'I think not,' he replied. 'I know at least three people who would do their best to prevent that; though if one of the three persons whom I am speaking of got them, they would go to Paris, and I don't like Paris for such very rare things; not a steady enough government to be quite safe for this class of article. Too revolutionary; given to burning things, now and then, you know.'

'Do you go in for foreign autographs?' I inquired.

'Yes, to a certain extent I do—that is, for my regular clients—but I don't speculate in them. If a client of mine wants the autograph of a living person, I of course get it; and I have agents abroad who are constantly on the look-out for autographs for me. I give them lists; but these lists, as a rule, are only those I've orders for and the price I will go to for each specimen. Take Cardinal Mazarin. I have two orders for him now, and my agents are on the look-out, but I should not speculate in him on my own account. The great collectors want him, but the smaller ones care nothing about such a man, and I dare not give the price he makes unless I know of a customer.'

'How do you know whom to speculate in?' I asked.

'Well, it is difficult to judge, but we keep a close watch on things. One way is to see what books are coming out, and when one is announced as nearly ready by any one whom we think will sell well, we set to work and lay in a stock of his autographs before the book is published and the demand begins. Of course a suddenly-made reputation places us very awkwardly; for weeks I was unable to meet the demand created by *John Inglesant*.'

'I suppose the great success of *Robert Elsmere* found you in a similarly unprepared condition?' I observed.

'Well, no, not to such an extent. As soon as I saw that Mr Gladstone was going to review it in the *Nineteenth Century*, I got as many Mrs Humphry Wards as I could, at a certain price;

then, when I had read the review, which I did the day it came out, I at once telegraphed to all my agents to buy her up at any price. In a week the run began, and for the next six months the sale was very brisk. I had bought cheaply, and sold dearly. Excepting to oblige other dealers, I never sold one for less than eight times what I gave for it.

'Then, again, at times we get a good deal of help from outsiders. A customer of mine, a man who is well known in politics and society, comes occasionally to look over what I have got, and he will tell me sometimes to go in for certain people. I never ask why, *but I do it*, and I never found him wrong.

'I will give you an instance of what I mean. We had done a good thing in Parnells during the *Times* case, but after it was over the demand dropped down to its normal standard again.

'Well, one day the man I have spoken of came, and after we had talked a little, and I had shown him one or two rare foreigners, he said, "If I were you I'd lay in a stock of Parnells, unless you have a big lot in hand." I asked no questions, but by that night's post I sent orders to all my agents, and so we were ready for the run when it came a second time, and it was a bigger thing than the first had been. While those scenes were going on in Committee Room No. 15, even I, who was prepared, could scarcely keep going, and most of the trade were buying up Parnells at simply fancy prices; for during a regular "run" we don't oblige each other, only as a rule when the demand is normal.

'Then, again, there are the people whom one has obliged; they will generally do us a good turn if they can.'

'Do you mean the other dealers?' I asked.

'No; I mean private individuals. It is in this way: a certain percentage of letters containing an account of family affairs or matters of private interest get out; how they do I cannot say for certain, but one theory is that they are stolen to sell.

'As soon as one of these letters comes into the hands of any respectable member of the trade, he at once sends it to the writer, if alive; if not, to his representative, and explains how he became possessed of it. There is often a cheque returned, and almost always a carefully worded letter of thanks, and the writer will generally do us a good turn afterwards if he can. I could give you the name of a man who never misses the chance of letting me know of a good thing, because I once returned him a letter he had written to a brother of his commenting on the conduct of a nephew of theirs. A man who has all the gossip of the London clubs at his finger's end, and who understands a certain amount about politics, can be very useful in a business like ours if he will take the trouble to be so.'

'I had no idea that autograph-collecting was reduced to such a regular system,' I said.

'No,' was the reply; 'very few people have any idea of the matter from the dealer's point of view. The public get what they want at sales, or through us, or by begging, but they do not realise that to deal in autographs requires an immense amount of knowledge of a peculiar kind, and that great care and forethought have to be exercised

if the business is to pay ; but it is work I like, and I think no one, dealer or collector, can go in for autographs without getting to be very fond of the thing.'

PRESTER JOHN.

By JOHN BUCHAN.

'Or he, who in the wilderness, where no man travels and few may live, dwelled in all good reason and kindness.'

Chronicle of S. Jean de Remy.

THE exact tale of my misadventure on that September day I can scarcely now remember. One thing I have clear in my mind—the weather. For it was in that curious time of year when autumn's caprices reach their height either in the loveliest of skies or a resolute storm. Now it was the latter, and for two days the clear tints of the season had been drowned in monotonous gray. The mighty hill-streams came down like fields in breadth, and when the wind ceased for a time, the roar of many waters was heard in the land. Ragged leaves blocked the path, heather and bracken were sodden as the meadow turf, and the mountain backs were now shrouded to their bases in mist, and now looming ominous and near in a pause of the shifting wrack.

In the third day of the weather I was tempted by the Evil One and went a-fishing. The attempt was futile, and I knew it, for the streams were boiling like a caldron, and no man may take fish in such a water. Nevertheless the blustering air and the infinite distance of shadowy hill-top took hold on me so that I could not choose but face the storm. And, once outside, the north wind slashed and buffeted me till my breath was almost gone ; and when I came to the river's edge, I looked down on an acre of churning foam and mountainous wave.

Now, the way of the place is this. The Gled comes down from flat desolate moorlands to the narrower glen, which in turn opens upon the great river of the country-side. On the left it is bounded by gentle slopes of brown heather, which sink after some score of miles into the fields of a plain ; but to the right there lies a tract of fierce country, rugged and scarred with torrents ; while at the back of all rise the pathless hills which cradle the Callowa and the Aller. It is a land wild on the fairest summer noon, but in the autumn storms it is black as a pit and impregnable as a fortress.

As ill-fortune would have it, I raised a good fish in my first pool, ran it, and lost it in a tangle of driftwood. What with the excitement and the stinging air my blood grew high. I laughed in the face of the heavens, and wrestled in the gale's teeth for four miles up-stream. It was the purest madness, for my casting-line was blown out of the water at almost every gust, and never another fish looked near me. But the keenness abode with me, and so it happened that about midday I stood at the foot of the glen whence the Cauldshaw burn pours its troubled waters to the Gled.

Something in the quiet strength of the great brown flood attracted me against my better judgment. I persuaded myself that in this narrower vale there must be some measure of shelter, and that in its silent pools there were chances of fish.

So, with a fine sense of the adventurous, I turned to the right and struck up by the green meadowlands and the lipping water. Before me was a bank of mist ; but even as I looked it opened, and a line of monstrous blue shoulders, ribbed and serrated with a thousand gullies, frowned on my path. The sight put new energy into my limbs. These were the hills which loomed far to the distant lowlands, which few ever climbed, and at whose back lay a land almost unknown to man. I named them to myself with the names which had always been like music to my ear—Craig-creich, the Yirnie, the two Muneraws, and the awful precipice of the Dreichil. With zest I fell to my fishing, and came in a little to the place where the vale ceased and the gorge began.

Here for the first time my efforts prospered, and I had one, two, and three out of the inky pots, which the spate had ringed and dappled with foam. Then, from some unknown cause, the wind fell, and there succeeded the silence which comes from a soaked and dripping world. I fished on and on, but the stillness oppressed me, and the straight crags, tipped with heather and black with ooze, struck me with something like awe.

Then, ere I knew, I had come to the edge of the gorge, and was out on the peat-moss which gives the Cauldshaw its birth. Once more there came a clearing in the mist, and hill-faces looked out a little nearer, a little more awful. Just beyond that moss lay their foot, and over that barrier of heath and crag lay a new land which I had not yet seen, and scarcely heard of. Suddenly my whole purpose changed. Storm or no storm, I would climb the ridge and look down on the other side. At the top of the little Muneraw there rose two streams—one, the Callowa, which flowed to the haughlands and meadows of the low country ; the other, the Aller, which fought its way to the very centre of the black deserts, and issued some fifty miles distant on another sea-board. I would reach the top, haply see the sight I had often longed for, and then take my weary way down the Callowa home.

So, putting up my rod and strapping tight my creel, I set my face to the knuckle of these mountains which loomed beyond the bog. How I crossed that treacherous land I can scarcely tell, for the rain had left great lagoons which covered shifting sand and clinging mud. Twice I was bogged to my knees, but by dint of many flying leaps from heather to heather, and many lowly scrambles over loose peat, I came to the hard ground whence the slope began. Here I rested, panting, marvelling greatly at my foolhardiness and folly. When honest men were dwelling in comfort at home, I in my fool's heart chose to be playing cantrips among mosses and scaurs and pathless rocks. I was already soaked and half tired, so in no great bodily ease I set myself to the ascent.

In two hours I had toiled to the front shoulder of the Muneraw, and sat looking down on a pit of mist whence three black lochs gleamed faint and shadowy. The place was hushed save for the croak of ravens and the rare scream of a hawk. Curlews and plovers were left far below ; the place was too wild for rushes or bracken ; and nothing met the eye but stunted heather, gray lichen-clad boulders, and dark crags streaked with the fall of streams. I loosened a stone and

sent it hurling to the loch below, and in a trice the air was thick with echoes of splash and rush and splinter.

Then once more I set my face to the steep and scrambled upward. And now there came to trouble me that very accident which I most feared; for the wind brought the accursed mist down on me like a plaid, and I struggled through utter blindness. The thickness of mirk is bad enough, but the thickness of white, illimitable ether is worse a thousandfold, for it closes the eye and mazes the wits. I kept as straight as might be for what I knew was the head of the hill, and now upon great banks of rotten granite, now upon almost sheer crags, I made my track. In maybe an hour the steeps ceased, and I lay and panted on a flat bed of shingle, while the clammy mist drenched me to the bone.

Now for the first time I began to repent of my journey, and took grace to regret my madcap ploy. For the full perils of the place began to dawn upon me. I was here, in this dismal weather, a score of miles from any village, and nigh half as many from the nearest human habitation. A sprain or a broken limb would mean death, and at any moment I might step over a cliff-face into eternity. My one course of safety lay in finding the Callowa springs, and following the trickle to the glens. The way was long, but it was safe, and sooner or later I must come to a dwelling-house.

I knew well that the Callowa rose on the south side of the Muneraw, and the Aller somewhere on the north. But I had lost all sense of direction, I had no compass, and had it not been for the wind, I should have been without guidance. But I remembered that it had blown clear from the north on all my way up the Gled, and now, as I felt its sting on my cheek, I turned with it to what I guessed to be the south. With some satisfaction I began to descend, now sliding for yards, now falling suddenly in a rocky pool, whence a trickle issued among a chaos of stones. Once I came to a high fall, which must have been wonderful indeed had the water been of any size, but was now no more than a silver thread on a great gray face. Sometimes I found myself in ravines where the huge sides seemed to mock the tiny brawling water. A lurking fear began to grow upon me. Hitherto I had found no loch, though I had gone for miles. Now, though I had never been at Callowa head, I had seen it afar off, and knew that the Back Loch o' the Muneraw lay near the source. But now the glen was opening, peat and heather were taking the place of stone, and yet I had seen no gleam of water.

I sat down to consider, and even as I looked the mist drew back again. And this was what I saw. Brown bog lay flat down a valley, with a stream in its midst making leaden pools. Now there are bogs and bogs, and some are harmless enough; but there was that in the look of this which I could not like. Some two miles down the stream turned, and a ridge of dark and craggy hills fronted the eye. Their edges were jagged, and their inky face was seamed and crossed with a thousand little cataracts. And beneath their shadow lay the cruel moss, with flows and lochs scattered over it like a map on a child's slate.

To my wonder, in the very lee of the hill I saw what seemed to be a cottage. There was a stunted tree, a piece of stone wall, and a plain

glimpse of a gray gable-end. Then I knew whither I had come. The wind had changed. I had followed north for south, and struck the Aller instead of the Callowa. I could not return over that fierce hill and these interminable moorland miles. There was naught to be done save to make for the stones, which might be a dwelling. If the place was ruined, I would even sleep the night in its shelter, and strive to return in the morning. If it was still dwelled in, there was hope of supper and bed. I had always heard of the Aller as the wildest of all waters, flowing, for most of its course, in a mossland untenanted of man. Something of curiosity took me, in spite of my weariness, to meet with a dweller in this desert. And always as I looked at the black hills I shuddered, for I had heard men tell of the Caldron, where no sheep ever strayed, and in whose sheer-falling waters no fish could live.

I have rarely felt a more awful eeriness than in crossing that monstrous bog. I struck far from the stream, for the Aller, which had begun as a torrent, had sunk into links of unfathomable moss-holes. The darkening was coming on, the grim hills stood out more stark and cruel, and the smell of water clung to my nostrils like the odour of salt to a half-drowned man. Forthwith I fell into the most violent ill-temper with myself and my surroundings. At last there was like to be an end of my aimless wanderings, and unless I got through the moss by nightfall, I should never see the morning. The thought nerved me to frantic endeavour. I was dog-tired and soaked to the marrow, but I plunged and struggled from tussock to tussock and through long black reaches of peat. Anything green or white I shunned, for I had lived too long in wildernesses to be ignorant that in the ugly black and brown lay my safety.

By-and-by the dusk came, and a light was kindled in the cottage, at which sign of habitation I greatly rejoiced. It gave me new heart, and when I came to a more level place I ran as well as my wearied legs would suffer me. Then for my discomfiture I fell into a great bed of peat, and came out exceeding dirty. Still the flare grew nearer, and at last, about seven o'clock, just at the thickening of darkness, I reached a stone wall and a house-end.

At the sound of my feet the door was thrown open, and a string of colliers rushed out to devour me. At their tail came the master of the place, a man bent and thin, with a beard ragged and torn with all weathers, and a great scarred face roughly brown with the hill air and the reek of peat.

'Can I stay?'—I began, but my words were drowned in his loud tone of welcome.

'How in the world did ye get here, man? Come in, come in; ye'll be fair perished.'

He caught me by the arm and dragged me into the single room which formed his dwelling. Half-a-dozen hens, escaping from the hutch which was their abode, sat modestly in corners, and from a neighbouring shed came the lowing of a cow. The place was so filled with blue fine smoke that my eyes were dazed, and it was not till I sat in a chair by a glowing fire of peats that I could discern the outlines of the roof. The rafters were black and finely polished as old oak, and the floor was flagged with the gray stones of

the moor. A stretch of sacking did duty for a rug, and there the tangle of dogs stretched itself to sleep. The furnishing was of the rudest, for it was brought on horseback over barren hills, and such a portage needs the stoutest of timber. But who can tell of the infinite complexity of the odour which filled the air, the pungency of peat, varied with a whiff of the snell night without and the comfortable fragrance of food?

Meat he set before me, scones and oaten-cakes, and tea brewed as strong as spirits. He had not seen loaf-bread, he told me, since the spring, when a shepherd from the Back o' the Caldron came over about some sheep, and had a loaf-end for his dinner. Then, when I was something recovered, I sat again in the fireside chair, and over pipes of the strongest black we held high converse.

'Wife!' he said, when I asked him if he dwelt alone; 'na, na, nae woman-body for me. I bide mysel', and bake my bakings, and shoo my brecks when they need it. A wife wad be a puir convenience in this pairt o' the world. I come in at nicht, and I dae as I like, and I gang out in the mornings, and there's naebody to care for. I can milk the coo mysel', and feed the hens, and there's little else that a man need dae.'

I asked him if he came often to the lowlands.

'Is't like,' said he, 'when there's twenty mile o' thick heather and shairp rock atween you and a level road? I naether gang there, nor do the folk there fash me here. I havena been at the kirk for ten 'ear, no since my faither de'd'; and though the minister o' Gledsmuir, honest man, tries to win here every spring, it's no' often he gets the length. Twice in the 'ear I gang far awa' wi' sheep, when I spain the lambs in the month o' August, and draw the crocks in the back-end. I'm expectin' every day to get word to tak' off the yowes.'

'And how do you get word?' I asked.

'Weel, the post comes up the road to the foot o' the Gled. Syne some o' the fairmers up the water tak' up a letter and leave it at the foot o' the Cauldshaw Burn. A fisher, like yersel', maybe, brings it up the glen and draps it at the herd's cottage o' the Front Muneraw, whaur it lies till the herd, Simon Wruddock, tak's it wi' him on his rounds. Noo, twice every week he passes the tap o' the Aller, and I've gotten a cairn there, whaur he hides it in an auld tin box among the stanes. Twice a week I gang up that way mysel', and find onything that's lyin'. Oh, I'm no' ill off for letters; I get them in about a week, if there's no' a snawstorm.'

The man leant forward to put a fresh coal to his pipe, and I marked his eyes, begrimed with peat smoke, but keen as a hawk's, and the ragged, ill-patched homespun of his dress. I thought of the good folk in the lowlands and the cities who lugged their fancies of simple Arcadian shepherds, who, in decent cottage, surrounded by a smiling family, read God's Word of a Saturday night. In the rugged man before me I found some hint of the truth.

'And how do you spend your days?' I asked.

'Did you never think of trying a more kindly country-side?'

He looked at me long and quizzically.

'Yince,' he said, 'I served a muister, a bit fleshier-body down at Gled-foot. He was aye biddin' me dae odd jobs about the toun, and I

couldna thole it, for I'm a herd, and my wark's wi' sheep. Noo I serve the Yerl o' Callowa, and there's no' a body dare say a word to me; but I manage things according to my ain guid judgement, wi'oot ony "by your leave." And whiles I've the best o' company, for yince or twice the Yerl has bided here a' nicht, when he was fore-wandered shooting among the muirs.'

But I was scarce listening, so busy was I in trying to picture an existence which meant incessant wanderings all day among the wilds, and firelit evenings, with no company but dogs. I asked him if he ever read.

'I ha'e a Bible,' he said doubtfully, 'and I whiles tak' a spell at it to see if I remember my schulin'. But I'm no keen on books o' ony kind.'

'Then what in the name of goodness do you do?' said I.

Then his tongue was unloosed, and he told me the burden of his days; how he loved all weather, fighting a storm for the fight's sake, and glorying in the conquest; how he would trap blue hares and shoot wild-fowl—for had he not the Earl's leave?—and now and then kill a deer strayed among the snow. He was full of old tales of the place, learned from a thousand odd sources, of queer things that happened in these eternal deserts, and queer sights which he and others than himself had seen at dawning and sunset. Some day I will put them all down in a book, but then I will inscribe it to children and label it fantasy, for no one would believe them if told with the circumstance of truth. But, above all, he gloried in the tale of the changes of sky and earth, and the multitudinous lore of the hills. I heard of storms when the thunder echoed in the Caldron like the bleating of great sheep, and the man sat still at home in terror. He told with solemn eyes of the coming of snow, of masterful floods in the Aller, when the dead sheep came down and butted, as he said, with their foreheads against his house-wall. His voice grew high, and his figure, seen in the red glare of the peats, was like some creature of a tale.

But in time the fire sank, the dogs slumbered, our pipes went out, and he showed me my bed. It was in the garret, which you entered by a trap from the shed below. The one window had been shattered by some storm and boarded up with planks, through whose crevices I could see the driving mist and the bog lying dead under cover of night. I slept on rough blankets of homespun, and ere I lay down, in looking round the place, I came upon a book stuck fast between the rafters and the wall. It was the Bible, used to brush up the shepherd's learning, and for the sake of his chances hereafter I dragged it forth and blew the dust from it.

In the morning the mist had gone, and a blue sky shone out, over which sudden gusts swept like boats on a loch. The damp earth still reeked of rain; and as I stood at the door and watched the Aller, now one line of billows, strive impetuous through the bog-land, and the hills gleam in the dawning like wet jewels, I no more wondered at the shepherd's choice. He came down from a morning's round, his voice bellowing across the uplands, and hailed me from afar. 'The hills are no vera dry,' he said, 'but they might be passed; and if I was sure I wadna bide, he wad

set me on my way.' So in a little I followed his great strides through the moss and up the hill-shoulder, till in two hours I was breathing hard on the Dreichil summit, and looking down on awful crags, which dropped sheerly to a tarn. Here he stopped, and, looking far over the chaos of ridges, gave me my directions.

'Ye see yon muckle soo-backit hill—yon's the Yirnie Clench, and if ye keep along the taps ye'll come to it in an 'oor's time. Gang down the far shouther o't, and ye'll see a burn which flows into a loch; gang on to the loch-foot, and ye'll see a great deep hole in the hillside, what they ca' the Nick o' the Hurlstanes; gang through it, and ye'll strike the Criven Burn, which flows into the Callowa; gang down that water till it joins the Gled, and syne ye're no' abune ten mile from whaur ye're bidin'. So guid-day to ye.'

And with these lucid words he left me and took his swinging path across the hill.

SOME REMARKABLE HABITS OF INSECTS.

By PERCY HALL GRIMSHAW.

IN our quest for knowledge of the animal kingdom we are constantly coming across the most curious habits of life; but nowhere do we find them more varied and interesting than among members of the insect world. We are all more or less familiar with the habits of certain members of this class of animals, such as the ant or the honey-bee, for whole volumes have been written about such well-known creatures; but there still remain a host of insects whose habits are equally interesting and wonderful, though not, perhaps, so generally known. Let us, therefore, take a few examples at random from the various orders into which insects are classified, and consider briefly how some of their time is occupied during the short period in which they are permitted to enjoy the pleasures of life.

In most of their actions we are led to understand that insects are guided by mere instinct, an incentive force which the dictionary defines as 'a natural impulse in animals, by which they are impelled to do what is necessary for existence, independently of instruction and experience.' In some of the cases to be presently considered, however, it will be found difficult to say how far the blind force of instinct is responsible, and where reason steps in, so clearly do the habits described seem to indicate the workings of intelligence.

Take, for example, those cases in which insects, free to fly anywhere and everywhere, seek out most carefully and particularly places in which to lay their eggs, so that the young when hatched shall find close at hand exactly the proper kind of food adapted for them. Such cases are really so numerous that it is difficult to decide upon examples to illustrate this point. Most of our butterflies, for instance, are very careful in selecting a particular kind of plant upon which to deposit their eggs, and this habit is so constant that it is almost useless for the entomologist in search of eggs or young caterpillars to examine any other species of plant than the one indicated in his text-book. Thus the well-known tortoiseshell butterfly always lays its eggs in an irregular heap on the under-side of a nettle leaf, so that

the newly-born caterpillars have nothing further to do but commence feeding at once—their food being all around them and in sufficient abundance to enable them to attain their full size without leaving the place where they are born. Again there is a kind of two-winged fly, commonly found in gardens, whose grub feeds upon the aphids or green-fly, and this insect has the instinct to lay each of its eggs *singly* in the midst of a number of these helpless and unsuspecting creatures. The young grub is devoid of legs, and indeed does not require organs of locomotion, for it has only to stretch out its body in every direction to secure plenty of food.

But surely the habits just mentioned are eclipsed by those of certain kinds of wasps, which burrow in the ground, in wood, or in other soft materials. After excavating a hole with its feet, which are admirably adapted for digging purposes, the mother-wasp flies off to secure spiders, flies, caterpillars, and all sorts of small insects, with which it furnishes the home of its progeny. These struggling items for the larval stings, sometimes to death, but often only partially, so that, being merely paralysed, they live on, unable to move or injure the eggs which are then laid near them. By this means a supply of what we might very well call 'fresh meat' is ready for the future grub, which usually goes through all its transformations within the burrow, only coming out on attaining the perfect and winged state.

We cannot leave this part of our subject without mentioning one more remarkable case of maternal care and instinct—namely, that of the carpenter-bee, a large and handsome insect, with lovely purple iridescent wings, found in the south of Europe and in tropical countries. The female scrapes out in a wooden post or paling a cylindrical tunnel, sometimes as much as fifteen inches in length and half-an-inch in diameter. This laborious undertaking is necessarily the work of several days. An egg is then laid at the bottom of the tube, and this the bee carefully shuts off by constructing a sort of ceiling out of the particles of sawdust which have accumulated on the ground as the result of the boring operations. This ceiling forms the floor of another cell or chamber lying immediately above the first one, and an egg is laid in this cell likewise. This process is repeated until the whole tube is divided into ten or a dozen compartments, each containing a single egg. As a consequence, however, of this peculiar method of nest-building, the egg laid at the bottom of the tube is the oldest, possibly by days, and hence hatches first. How, then, is the bee, when full-grown, to find its way out of the tube without disturbing its companions? As if aware of this difficulty, the mother-bee, with remarkable foresight, has already constructed an orifice at the farther end of the tube, through which the new-born bees can crawl out in succession. What is still more remarkable, by a very curious instinct, the grubs, when about to enter the quiescent or pupal stage, place themselves, if not already in that position, with their heads downwards, and thus each newly matured bee is enabled to pierce the partition immediately below it, and so work its way out of the old home without disturbing the companions of its youth.

In securing their food-supply certain insects assume very remarkable habits. Not the least interesting example is that of the larva of the ant-lion, a creature about half-an-inch in length, but in proportion to its size of a very formidable appearance, owing to the great curved jaws with which its mouth is armed. As its name implies, this grub feeds mainly upon ants, and the method in which it secures these active creatures is quite unique. An inhabitant of sandy places, it digs out in the loose sand a deep, conical pit, performing this operation in a most methodical and scientific manner. The *modus operandi* is as follows: First tracing out a circle in the sand, the little creature takes up a position just within the line, and pushing the hinder part of its body under the surface, loads its broad, flat head with sand, using one of its fore-legs as a shovel. Then, by a jerk of the head, the little shovelful of sand is thrown to the outside of the circle. Moving backwards along the line, this process is repeated until, by working round and round, and gradually getting nearer the centre, a circular pit is excavated more than two inches deep and about three inches across the top. Now the larva buries itself at the bottom of the pit, and lies quietly and patiently with only its jaws visible until some poor unsuspecting but curious ant, coming along in its usual hurry to the edge of the pit, steps just a little too far and slips over the fatal brink. Owing to the very loose nature of the sand, the struggles of the ant only result in its slipping farther downwards, until the ever-ready jaws of our hungry grub seize the expected but unsuspecting victim and make short work of it, sucking it dry and throwing the carcass well over the sides of the pit, so as not to betray to future passers-by the secrets of this curious trap.

And now let us turn our attention to some curious habits assumed by insects as a means of defence. The dangers to which these small creatures are exposed are very numerous and varied in their character, and so we find the methods of securing safety correspondingly manifold. A common device by which protection is obtained is by feigning death; some beetles, for example, possessing the habit of curling themselves up or tucking in their legs under their bodies, and falling off the leaf or twig where they happen to be situated on to the ground, where they lie quite motionless until the danger is past. The assimilation of the colour of such beetles to their surroundings is also a material aid in the deception of their enemies; but still better instances of concealment by protective resemblance, as this method is called, are to be found. The caterpillars of a certain group of moths known as geometers or 'loopers,' from the peculiar way in which they seem to measure out the ground as they walk, have a most remarkable resemblance to the twigs of the plant upon which they are found, and this deception is further increased by a most curious habit, possessed by these creatures, of holding on to the branch or twig by the short, clasping legs which are situated at the extreme end of the body, and sticking out at an angle in quite a stiff and rigid position. Thus it generally requires the keen and well-trained eye of an experienced entomologist to detect the presence and nature of these animal twigs.

Again, the well-known case of the leaf-butter-

fly of India is an extremely interesting instance of protection by passive means. On the upper surface this handsome butterfly is quite brightly coloured, being of a beautiful purplish blue crossed by a band of orange. The wings underneath, however, are of a dull brown, and vary in shade in nearly every individual. Now nearly all butterflies when at rest fold up their wings over the back, so that the upper surface is entirely hidden, and so when our butterfly settles on a twig it becomes a close imitator of the leaves which surround it, not only by reason of its colour, but also as a result of its peculiar shape. Each of the hind-wings is drawn out to a point which is almost black underneath, and the two points, fitting exactly together and just touching the twig, form a veritable stalk to this wonderful leaf. Even the spots of mould and decayed holes so commonly seen in dead leaves are exactly imitated, so that altogether this insect is a marvellous mimic, and to be justly regarded as one of the most interesting cases of adaptation to surroundings in the whole realm of nature.

Often, however, a more active way of escaping from or dealing with their enemies is adopted by members of the insect world, and the use of stinging organs like those of bees and wasps is perhaps the best-known example. But there are other methods very different from this, and just one of these may be given in illustration.

The caterpillar of the puss-moth, quite a common insect in this country, has a most effective way of defending itself, and may prove, as we shall presently see, dangerous even to human beings. This well-protected caterpillar is provided between its head and fore-legs with a cleft, from which it can protrude an organ capable of squirting out a quantity of very acid fluid to a considerable distance, and when alarmed it habitually makes use of this formidable weapon. In one of the entomological magazines a correspondent states that he was observing some of these caterpillars in captivity, when he happened to disturb one, and it suddenly squirted out a quantity of fluid in a jet, which struck one of his eyeballs, though his head at the time was quite two feet away from the insect. He rushed off in great agony to a doctor, who told him that the eyeball was in a very dangerous condition. His eye was totally blind for hours after the occurrence, and it was some days before he finally recovered. What the effect of this fluid must be upon smaller creatures we leave our readers to imagine!

Our brief sketch of the curious habits possessed by some members of the vast assemblage of insects, of which no less than 230,000 different kinds are at present known to naturalists, must not be closed without some reference to their methods of locomotion. They creep, walk, run, jump, fly, and even swim, and the remarkable manner in which their legs and wings are modified for these various modes of progression would alone furnish material sufficient to fill a bulky volume. The hind-legs of a flea or grasshopper, for example, the legs of the swiftly-running tiger-beetle, the expansive wings of a moth or butterfly, or the oar-like hind-legs of some of the water-bugs are each of them an instance of the close relationship which exists between the structure of an organ and its function. Had we unlimited space at our

disposal we might discourse at considerable length on many curious methods of progression in each order of insects; but we must refrain. Let us, therefore, conclude by mentioning as briefly as possible two curious cases in which exceedingly minute insects swim, not merely on the surface of water, like most of the class which take to this habit, but actually through it. Here we meet with a remarkable instance of an organ being totally diverted from its ordinary functions to meet special requirements, for one of these tiny creatures is found in pond-water swimming about *by means of its wings!* It can live for several hours in the water without inconvenience, although it only possesses the ordinary breathing tubes characteristic of insects generally. The other insect to which we have alluded is closely related to the first one; but when under water it swims by using its legs as cars, holding its wings quite motionless.

With this example we must take leave of our readers, merely recommending to them a further search into the secrets of Nature, especially as revealed to entomologists; for, in the words of Fleming, 'it is evident that the general tendency of the study is to lead us from the admiration of the works to the contemplation of their Author; to teach us to look through Nature up to Nature's God. It is a study which terminates in the conviction, the knowledge, and the adoration of that Being to whom we owe everything that we enjoy.'

MEDICINE BAGS.

THE practice of wearing about the person something to ward off or to cure disease appears to be universal. Among the ignorant and superstitious this still takes the form of an amulet, which may consist of a bit of bone or a dead spider, or of some sacred relic blessed by priest or pope. Pliny recommended the dust in which a hawk has bathed itself, tied up in a linen cloth with a red string and attached to the body, as a remedy for fever; or a caterpillar similarly used might have the same effect.

The Romans were *bullæ* as a protection from evils, and it may be safely asserted that in all ages and all countries similar amulets or charms have been worn as 'medicine.' Even the change of religion from Paganism to Christianity did not do away with the superstitious use of charms, but only substituted relics of saints for the older bones and teeth of men and animals; and it is often amusing to read accounts of the doings in this respect of early missionaries among savages, especially in Africa.

In Merolla's *Voyage to the Congo*, we are told that the wizards bound the children with certain cords, 'at the same time hanging round their necks bones and teeth of divers animals, being preservatives, as they say, against the power of any disease.' The Catholic missionaries ordered women who brought their children to be baptised wearing these cords to be whipped; but the mother was at the same time enjoined 'to wear religious relics instead of wizards' mats, to bind their infants with cords made of palm-leaves, consecrated on Palm

Sunday, and to guard them with other such relics as we are accustomed to make use of at the time of baptism.' Physicians meanwhile encouraged the use of medicine bags containing strong-smelling drugs as a means of preventing those terrible diseases prevalent during centuries when sanitary science was unknown; and indeed it may be said that, even at the present day, medicine bags of eucalyptus, camphor, or other disinfectants continue to be worn as prophylactics, even by the most highly educated among ourselves, whilst among savages there is almost always some therapeutic element mingled with the amulet in the medicine bag.

Cook, in his first voyage to New Zealand, speaks of little bags of perfume worn by the Maoris round their necks; and it would seem, from the observations of Colenso, as given in the *Transactions* of the New Zealand Institute, that these little satchels or medicine bags contain four perfumes—a sweet-scented moss, a fragrant fern, an odoriferous gum, and *taramea*.

The *taramea* is the amulet or talisman; it is a gum procured from a rare and very prickly-leaved alpine plant, collected with great difficulty and with many superstitious ceremonies, and is said to be obtainable only by young virgins after many prayers, charms, &c., recited by the priest or medicine man.

The medicine bags of the natives of Africa are not so simple as those of the New Zealanders, perhaps because the purposes for which they are required are more complicated. Of these the cure of disease is the least, and the making of rain the most important.

Mr Holden gives the contents of the rain-maker's medicine bag as 'charcoal made of bats; inspissated renal deposit of the mountain coney, which is used medicinally in the shape of pills, as a good anti-spasmodic; jackals' livers, baboons' and lions' hearts, hairy calculi from the bowels of old cows, serpents' skins and vertebrae, and every kind of tuber, root, and plant to be found in the country' (*Kaffir Races*, p. 310). Among the Zulus and Matabele, the kings are the chief medicine men, and a description is given of King Lo Bengula when busily engaged in making medicine on the great Feast-day of the Matabele, in a special hut prepared for the purpose.

The king of Swaziland is also high-priest, prophet, and rain-maker to his people; and, as Mr Mather says in his *Golden South Africa*: 'In a bag of goatskin in his own special hut he has treasures—all sorts of odds and ends. A peep into that bag discloses knuckle-bones of men and beasts, pieces of dried flesh, bits of hair, roots and stalks of plants, rocks, scraps of broken bottles, together with an old tattered photograph or two. When rain is wanted Umbandine gets his queer bag out. He calls one or two witch-doctors to attend him, and then performs some tricks. An ox is sacrificed, after which his Majesty declares that it will rain.'

In this multitude of charms the idea of medicine as a cure for disease seems to be entirely lost sight of; but probably some of them may be used internally, for roots and stalks of plants usually figure among them. For it may be observed that savages have everywhere discovered the medicinal uses of their native roots

and plants, and have in many instances initiated Europeans in their virtues. The Kaffirs always carry and use the root of the male fern as an anthelmintic, and there is a certain root known among the Dutch at the Cape as 'David's Root,' eagerly sought by the Hottentots and Bushmen, and dug up by them with much ceremony, when the sun is at a particular point in the heavens, the digger using many precautions that his or her shadow may not rest upon it. This root is a powerful tonic, and is used by them as such, and from them has been transferred to European medicine-chests. These untutored savages know also the value of mints as nerve soothers, and employ the leaves of a native mint to bind upon the head in case of headache. We might, indeed, cite instances innumerable in which valuable plants have been introduced into our pharmacopœia from native sources, but will only mention the coca, now so highly prized, which has been in use in Central America and Mexico for who shall say how many centuries.

The American Indians are perhaps of all races the most addicted to the superstitious use of 'medicine.' The medicine bag is with them an essential of manhood, only acquired after their initiatory fasting, when, having dreamt of the animal henceforth destined to be their totem, its likeness is drawn on bark and hung round the neck, or put in a bag either of the skin of this totem, or of other skin made to resemble it in form, which henceforth contains all the medicine necessary in war or the chase. The bag of the medicine man contains also numerous herbs, sticks, and crystals of special use in healing the sick or bringing rain or other desired blessings.

Among certain tribes there are sacred bags belonging to the tribe, guarded by appointed warriors, which are looked upon as possessed of magical powers, and which are consulted as fetiches upon grand occasions.

Among the Omahas, for example, there are five of these bags, filled with feathers of different birds sacred to the thunder god. Each of these has a special guardian whose sole work is to bear the bag; and when council is held, the bags are placed in the centre of a circle of warriors and opened by their several bearers, the beak of the bird, of which each is composed, being always turned towards the foe. When on the war-path, the bearers of these sacred bags march in advance of the body of warriors.

There are other medicine bags used among the Omahas in their ceremonial dances; some of these are formed of otter-skin. The otter being a sacred animal among most of the Indian tribes, the bearers of otter-skin bags are restricted to five, whilst others carry bags made of musk-rat or any other animal; sometimes, it is said, of human skin.

But in the midst of all their magical ceremonies and incantations the American medicine men do not neglect the use of drugs, for the candidate for admission into the Midē, or medicine society, is taken into the woods and instructed in the uses and virtues of plants. It is worthy of remark that one of their chief remedies is to bathe in water in which pine-needles have been soaked; another great remedy employed being sweating or the use of

Turkish baths, which apparently form the preliminary to all healing ceremonies, more especially among the Navajos and Zuñis. With these tribes the cure of disease may be regarded as a portion of their religion, and is accompanied by many most singular and elaborate rites, in the midst of which one is somewhat surprised to see a faint recognition of the modern theory of germs; for everything which has touched the sick person is carefully carried to a distance from the tent and placed in a heap beneath a pinon-tree, every one being forbidden to touch it lest they should contract the disease.

The medicine bags of the Navajos, Zuñis, and Apaches, all kindred tribes in New Mexico and Arizona, contain a curious powder known as *corn-pollen* or *hoddentin*. This powder, which is the pollen of a rush, and also of maize, appears to be used as a medicine, being eaten by the sick and put on the head or other parts to ease pain, but principally as a sacred offering to the sun and moon, and as a sanctifier of everything. A pinch of it is thrown towards the sun and then towards the four winds for help in war or the chase, is put on the trail of a snake to prevent harm from it, placed on the tongue of the tired hunter as a restorative, hung in bags round the necks of infants as a preservative, and sprinkled on the dead. In fact, every action of these Indians is sanctified by this powder, so that, as Captain Bourke writes in the ninth volume of the *Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Smithsonian), 'plenty of hoddentin has come to mean that a particular performance or place is sacred.'

Captain Bourke shows many analogies to the use of this sacred powder, both in the East and among the ancient Greeks and Romans, and it is clear that similar practices with regard to 'medicine'—that is, magic—have prevailed everywhere and in all ages; for superstition seems to be the universal heritage of man, so deeply ingrained in his very nature that all the efforts of philosophers and 'Thirteen-clubs' will not avail to root it out. Medicine bags or amulets will continue to be worn openly or secretly, not only by the wild Indian and the Kaffir, but by many among ourselves who cling to the beliefs handed down probably from remote prehistoric ages.

GOOD-BYE.

WHAT you might once have been to me,
It does not matter now;
I trusted you, and left you free
To keep or break your vow.

You said you loved me—and perhaps
You may have been sincere;
But when we parted, you forgot—
I do not blame you, dear.

And now, though you are mine no more,
Though I can not forget
The days gone by, I curse you not:
For, dear, I love you yet.

S. LE FANU.

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SLEEPLESS NIGHTS.

By BARRINGTON MACGREGOR.

You can hardly take up a journal that professes to give 'Answers to Correspondents' without finding in it some recipe for the cure of insomnia; and when you come to speak of it, you discover that each one of your friends and acquaintances has his own favourite remedy, warranted effectual in every case but your own. Very tantalising are these cures that bear such splendid records, are so simple in themselves, and yet prove so aggravatingly futile when you come to try them for yourself.

Some of us, I am happy to say, hardly ever seriously need one of them. We were probably dormice in some former stage of our evolution, and—given the proper time and place—could go asleep with our heads in teapots, our heels in the air, and March hares and hatters hanging on to our legs. But then, to counterbalance this, we heavy sleepers can generally cram as much misery into a single *nuit blanche* as an ordinary light sleeper would spread over a whole week.

Not that such nights invariably bring misery, even to a heavy sleeper, when they come but one at a time. For instance, there is the night of delightful travel, when you are being carried onward luxuriously through scenery that would be lovely even by starlight, but that in the bright moonlight looks simply glorious; or across the tranquil summer sea, with the foam and wake of your vessel coruscant with living fire; or, better still, when every revolution of the screw, every throb of the railway-engine, or every step of the horses brings you so much the nearer to your dearest on earth. There is the night of joyful looking forward, when you cannot sleep for the increasing anticipation of the triumph you are to realise, the new scenes you are to witness, the long-parted friend whose hand you are to clasp, the bride you are to make your own. There is the night passed, not in bed, but in your easy-chair, eagerly discussing some matter of engrossing

interest, while you see your myriapod opponent bereft of his limbs one after another, and finally 'left without a leg to stand on.' And even for a succession of nights, there are those spent in needful labour, as you toil at your press, your pen, your engine, or whatever may be the means whereby you perform your share in keeping the world sweet, and wholesome, and habitable for your fellow-men, and—with your brother night-livers—give the day-livers due return for their care of your daily rest.

We all know the *sham nuit blanche*, when we think we have been awake, and on the strength of the impression inform our friends in perfect good faith that we 'have not slept a wink the whole night.' And yet somehow the night has passed pretty quickly for all that, and every time we struck (our repeater or) a match to look at our watch, we found that the hands had taken a leap not easily to be accounted for.

But one really bad sleepless night can cause misery enough. Even the curtain-lecture night is not to be too lightly spoken of. Shade of Jerrold! let us draw a veil—a curtain, rather—over it, and say no more. Blessed bachelorhood that knows it not, but can retire, unmolested and unrebuked, to its virtuous pillow, and sleep the sleep of the just!

But take, for instance, the bilious night, when 'the burden of good eating' weighs heavily on you, and you lie in a state of mental as well as bodily indigestion. Every mistake you have ever had the misfortune to make, not to mention every actual fault you have ever committed, seems to be present; and each is brought up by an attendant imp, whose office is to point out how easily you might have avoided it. Every wrong done you, down to all the real or fancied slights you have ever suffered, rises in your mind, for the most part grotesquely exaggerated. Your unpaid bills, your overdue subscriptions, your children's education, your taxes, all come climbing over you 'like squash-vines in a meadow'—

Yea, as the pumpkin clammers
Over an Indian grave,

Or as the Mississippi
Inundates with its wave
And playfully slops over
A town in merry sport,
E'en so you then got clambered
All over by

every unpleasant thing that has ever happened, or is ever likely, by any possibility, to happen to you.

Or take the night of overwork, when the last sentence your weary brain has evolved of your novel, or your sermon, or, still worse, the last line of your poem, keeps reiterating itself with the persistency of 'Punch in the presence of the pass-en-jare,' and your palpitating pulse keeps time to the words with a steam-hammer beat. Or perhaps it is the last figures of your calculation that rise up like little fiery demons, range themselves in impossible combinations, and go on adding and multiplying up to millions of billions, all of which you *must* grasp intelligently, as the vast sum comes rolling eternally out of the infinite. One such night as this last is enough for even the lightest sleeper. Two or three mean meningitis or madness.

Akin to those nights, though rather different at first, is the night of wakefulness caused by strong tea or other stimulant. You lie (if you go to bed at all) with your mind full of the most vivid fancies, the grandest schemes, the most brilliant plots, the profoundest arguments—but don't you just pay for them all next day?

There is another night, too, from which may God long keep us!—the night of hopeless watching; when you sit as the hours drag from their march on the pitiless clock-face on to the next, and on to the next, while beside you lies all that earth holds for you of light and love; and the eyes grow dimmer, as the hands point to the descending figures; and then—when the darkness is deepest, and the life of the world a whole world's-breadth away, at last comes the end. But not for you, oh, not for you! Would that it were for you too! for all of your self that is left behind is but a dull automaton, and nothing can ever be again on earth as it was in the days that are gone.

To any one, whether a heavy or light sleeper, a succession of *bona fide* sleepless nights must be terrible indeed. The unspeakable ingenuity of Chinese and other Oriental torture-mongers has invented no more horrible punishment than that of enforced wakefulness. Many of us, no doubt, have had our blood run cold over Rudyard Kipling's tale of *The King's Jest*, as we read how—

Slowly he led to a peach-tree small,
That grew by a cleft of the city wall.
And he said to the boy, They shall praise thy zeal
So long as the red spurt follows the steel.
And the Russ is upon us even now?
Great is thy prudence—await them, thou.
Watch from the tree. Thou art young and strong.
Surely thy vigil is not for long.

A guard was set that he might not flee—
A score of bayonets ringed the tree.
The peach-bloom fell in showers of snow,
When he shook at his death as he looked below.
By the power of God, who alone is great,
Till the seventh day he fought with his fate.

The rest, as Mr Gilbert says in his picture of the chastisement of Sir Guy's Saracen maiden—is

too awful. And when we think of the real horror of the thing, and So-and-so tells us that 'he has not closed his eyes for four or five nights,' and yet seems in his right mind at the time of telling, we are apt to add the proverbial modicum of chloride of sodium to his statement.

In conclusion, may I present my readers with a really valuable *recipe* for obtaining relief from any persistent noise that hinders their slumbers? Turn on your right side, and press your head on the pillow, with your right ear folded over on itself so as to close its orifice. Then lay the back of your right hand across your cheek, so that the large knuckle at the base of its first finger shall stop the orifice of your left ear. Lastly, take a grip of the bedclothes with your left hand, and bring them well over your right arm, thrusting your handful of them under the bolster: this will prevent your right knuckle leaving its post of duty when you fall asleep. Many a comfortable morning's nap have I secured in a noisy hotel by this device.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER VIII.

IF Alexander Philipof had analysed his feelings with regard to Dostoief and his wife a month or so after his return from the war, he would have been forced to admit that his affection for Olga had increased as rapidly as his dislike for her husband. He was by this time firmly wedded to the habit of calling at the Dostoief mansion daily in order to relieve, as he persuaded himself, the monotony of Olga's existence; for 'the Tsarsman,' as folks now styled Vladimir Dostoief, rarely absented himself from the palace, and Olga was mostly alone unless Sasha came to keep her company. There was no talk of love; Philipof came equipped with the most single-minded intention to prove himself a loyal and honourable friend to her. When he did happen to meet Dostoief, such meetings added nothing to the warmth of the feelings which the two men entertained towards one another.

As for Olga herself, she was at this time increasingly absorbed in the contemplation of an approaching domestic event. Philipof's visits had become to her a matter of course; as much a necessary part of the day's occupation as dinner or any other regular daily function.

Dostoief's infatuation for the Emperor seemed to increase as time went on, and every month the Winter Palace saw more of him; while poor Olga, alone at home, enjoyed less of his company. When with his wife, the Tsarsman was kind and attentive, and appeared to be sincerely devoted, in a quiet way, to her; but neither love for her nor a sense of domestic duty was powerful enough to keep him at home a single moment longer than was absolutely necessary—that is, longer than the time thoughtfully placed at his disposal by his imperial master 'for attendance to home duties.'

Philipof's heart chafed within him as he observed how little notice Dostoief took of his wife and of his (Sasha's) intimation that he should require her husband to treat Olga with consideration and show her no neglect. Olga was too loyal to the man she had married to confess even to her

friend that she felt deeply his continued absence from home; but more than once a tell-tale tear or a sigh hastily suppressed revealed to Philipof that poor Olga suffered more than she cared to say. And this embittered him against her husband more and more, until he felt that, if it were not for the fear of distressing Olga, he would give worlds to thrash the fellow within an inch of his life, or, if he objected to that, shoot him, or 'pink' him—any violence would do.

Things came to a crisis a few days after Olga's baby was born. Philipof sat by its child-mother's couch, the little one lying in her bosom. Olga—looking very frail and beautiful—was showing off her treasure in all the pride and happiness of maternity. It was to be called either Vladimir or Alexander, she declared, after Sasha or Dostoief and the two great Russian Saints, but which of the two she found difficult to determine. Saint Vladimir, Olga said in all seriousness, had done grand service for Russia—everything!—he had made a Christian country of her and thrown her idols—Perun and the rest—into the sea; but then Saint Alexander had done so much for herself and those she loved—witness his interference to save Sasha's life at Inkermann!—which did Sasha think the baby ought to be called—Vladimir or Alexander?

'I can't imagine!' said Philipof; then he added, making a generous concession to Olga's weakness—for he never mentioned her husband if he could help it—'What does his father think about it?'

Olga blushed and looked down at her sleeping baby, and toyed with the tiny hand that lay upon her own. 'Vladimir has not seen him yet,' she said very softly. 'He is very busy with the Tsar just now.'

It was then that a great wave of hatred for both the Tsar and this infatuated servant of his went surging over Sasha's heart, swamping for the moment every sympathy he may ever have cherished for either, and causing him inwardly to curse both, and to long for an opportunity to avenge Dostoief's cruelty and neglect. When he spoke, however, after a considerable pause, he had mastered his passion so far as to be able to answer with apparent calm.

'Do you mean to tell me, Olga,' he said, 'that your husband has not been to see you, and the child here, since its birth?'

'He sent his love and congratulations as soon as he heard of it,' Olga hastened to explain, 'and said he would come as soon as ever he could; but'—Olga's lips trembled—'I do wish he would come! I have never loved him, Sasha, or needed him so much as now; this little darling seems to have'—Here Olga broke off; she bent her head lower and lower until her face was hidden in the little mass of lace and flannel in her bosom, and Sasha could see by the shaking of her body that the poor little neglected mother was crying bitterly. The baby awoke and yelled, and Sasha—as men always do at that signal—took his departure.

He walked straight for the Winter Palace, his heart choking with indignation and bitterness. 'Love and congratulations' indeed, and the poor little wife breaking her heart because her inhuman brute of a husband preferred to kick his heels in a Tsar's antechamber on the chance of

catching a stray smile or a word of imperial notice, but the trouble of visiting his wife at this crisis, of all times, when his presence and sympathy would mean so much to her, and would cost him nothing, curse him! 'Love and congratulations' indeed!

Philipof had not the slightest idea how he was going to proceed when he reached the palace; but he was determined at any rate to find Dostoief, and to tell him, as plainly as words could convey it, what he thought of his conduct.

Fortune favoured him for once. As Philipof approached the small side-door of the Winter Palace, an officer drove rapidly away from it, wrapped to the eyes in a huge fur mantle. As he passed, Sasha recognised him as the Tsar, and was just in time to salute, feeling insanely savage with himself a moment after for having done so. This was the man for whose sake Dostoief neglected his wife, who was breaking her heart in the honest endeavour to develop a wifely affection for him in spite of his neglect, and who most naturally longed to see the father of her baby at such a time. Why should he show him any civility? Sasha stood and stared down the road after the Tsar, scowling, and a couple of policemen on duty close to the palace door made a note of the circumstance. Then two sledges, each with an aide-de-camp on board, followed rapidly after the imperial vehicle, and the drivers shouted to him to get out of the way. As he did so, Philipof noticed that the second of the sledges carried Dostoief himself, and he yelled vigorously to attract the hussar's attention. Dostoief looked round and recognised him.

'Stop,' shouted Sasha, heedless of spectators and policemen; 'stop and get out! I wish to speak to you.'

Dostoief flushed angrily, but bade his coachman stop.

'What is it?' he said. 'Quickly, please; I cannot leave his Majesty to drive on alone!' He looked wistfully after the Tsar as he spoke.

'Yet you can leave your wife without compunction for a week at a time,' snarled Sasha. 'Go to her, man, if you are a man, and let the Tsar go without you for once.'

Philipof was terribly angry, but he was discreet enough to lower his voice as he uttered the last part of his sentence. Nevertheless, Dostoief looked around in horror to see whether any one of those within earshot had heard it. Nobody had. Then he tapped his coachman on the shoulder as a signal to drive on.

'You're mad, my good man,' he said. 'I cannot talk with persons who say such things!'

The next moment Dostoief's sledge was flying like a winged thing down the splendid Quay of the Winter Palace, drawn by the conventional trotting shaft-horse, accompanied by a galloping companion 'dressed,' as the Frenchmen term it, 'in liberty,' and called in Russian the *prestlyashka*.

Then, indeed, Sasha fumed and raged, and vowed in his innermost soul that he would go and lie in wait for Dostoief at his own house until it should please him to visit his wife, and then and there have it out with him once for all.

But though Sasha returned to the Dostoief mansion and waited all the rest of the day for its neglectful lord to arrive, that exemplary servant

of the Tsar did not leave his imperial master in order to make acquaintance with his little son and heir, and Philipof went home with his mind in a chaotic state—a state in which vague ideas of murder and duelling and horse-whipping played prominent parts; the question being, not whether Dostoief should be punished, but *how*. If Sasha had happened to meet his enemy in the way that night there would certainly have been an assault committed. Luckily for both parties, he did not.

When Philipof visited his ward the next day, however, though still resolved to have it out with Dostoief, he was considerably calmer and more sane than he had been on the previous evening. But Olga had a communication to make which rearoused his smouldering wrath and irritated him almost beyond control.

Dostoief had been to see his wife at last. He had been very kind, Olga said, and seemed greatly pleased with the baby; he really couldn't possibly have come before—Olga was quite satisfied of that, for the Tsar had required his presence very particularly; but he was going to try and come oftener now—and—this was the crux, and poor Olga burst into tears as she stammered out the painful communication—'He made me promise to tell you,' she sobbed, 'that he would rather you didn't come here any more after what happened near the Winter Palace. Oh! what *did* happen, Sasha? and what have you been doing or saying to offend him?'

Philipof jumped up with a great oath; he had never sworn before in Olga's presence, and it frightened her.

'Oh, he said that, did he?' shouted Sasha in his rage. 'He forbade me to see my own cousin and ward and—and more than either, whom he neglects, like the brute he is? Ha, ha! Good! And what did you say to that?'

Poor Olga lay with her baby tightly hugged to her breast, pale and frightened and miserable.

'I said nothing at all,' she sobbed; 'there was nothing to say.'

'Nothing to say when the fellow forbade you to receive your own guardian and lifelong friend, who has, theoretically, more right to you than he has!' cried Sasha, stamping up and down the room. 'Nonsense, Olga. What did you tell him?'

'But I couldn't say I wouldn't see you, because I must see you, of course; and I couldn't say I would disobey him either, he was so angry!' explained poor Olga, amid her tears. 'And you mustn't call him a brute, Sasha, for he is very kind and good to me; and he is baby's father—we should not forget that!'

'Only he himself may forget it, apparently,' Sasha snarled. 'If it comes to a choice between this man and your—and me, it is very clear which side you will take, Olga.'

'God grant it will never come to that, Sasha,' cried Olga, weeping copiously; 'for a wife has no choice in such a matter; it is cruel to talk to me so. Oh! what am I to do?—what am I to do?'

Philipof's better nature reasserted itself at this appeal, and he soothed and consoled the sobbing girl as best he could. When he left her, presently, he had promised her two things—that he would not quarrel with Dostoief on her account, and that he would visit her only when summoned by her-

self; this would be safer, she said, than risking angry meetings by coming at all times.

'I shall tell him I intend to see you when I need you,' she said, 'and he won't forbid it, I know; for he is ever so much kinder to me than you think, and he is very, very fond of me. It is only that the Tsar thinks so much of him that he likes to have Vladimir with him at all times.'

'Confound the Tsar,' muttered Sasha to himself; 'and confound Vladimir too! I wish to heaven he had never crossed our path!'

MOUNT ATHOS.

SOUTH of Macedonia the European continent throws forward into the Ægean Sea a triple peninsula, as if the fingers of a gigantic hand. The most eastern of these three tongues of land is the 'Iliagion Oros,' or the Sacred Mountain, known to us as Mount Athos. This is almost an island, about thirty-one miles in length by an average breadth of about four miles. Its coasts are cut into bays and beaches, bounded by promontories; a mountain-range runs down the centre, its peaks rising from the prairies and forests like rocky islets from an ocean. At the southern extremity an immense naked rock, emerging abruptly from the oaks, chestnuts, and pines which encompass its base, the conical peak of Athos elevates itself some 6000 feet. The tongue of land, with Athos as its head, and the rocky range stretching backwards towards the mainland, has been aptly compared to a huge Sphinx crouching in the blue waters.

The views from the summit command a vast panorama, including the coasts of Chalcedonia, Macedonia, and Thrace, the curious sharp cone of Samothrace, the Ægean Archipelago, and the dim outlines of the Asian shores. Olympus in Thessaly and Mount Ida in Asia Minor are visible in clear weather; and, as Sophocles said, Mount Athos throws its shadow over Lemnos.

The amazing fertility of the Hagion peninsula and its beautiful scenery have attracted attention from the earliest ages. Doric legends say a giant detached Athos from Thrace to hurl it against Olympus, but, as he fell short of his aim, it dropped into the Ægean Sea. Homer relates that, flying from Olympus, Juno rested on Athos. Herodotus and Thucydides record that Xerxes, to make manifest his power to the Greeks, cut a canal through the narrow isthmus at the northern end of the peninsula. The sculptor Dinocrates proposed to carve the peak of Athos into a grand statue of Alexander the Great—a city to be upheld in one hand and a cataract to leap from the other hand! Medieval stories select it as the 'high mountain' whereon Satan tempted Christ; and other legends name it as a very favourite resort of the Virgin Mary.

In ancient times the peninsula contained many towns, of which the sole vestiges to-day are fragments (pillars, capitals, and sculptured stones) utilised in building the convent walls.

Plutarch and Pliny tell us the Athenian philosophers frequented Athos in the summer seasons.

In early Christian days numerous ascetics and anchorites chose its shady retreats; some of these gradually grouped themselves into religious communities, which as years rolled by were endowed and enriched by Byzantine, Servian, and Bulgarian magnates.

The earliest monastery is said to have been founded in the fourth century of our era; but the written records run back only to the ninth century. In the tenth century many monastic communities existed here, the population of which, according to Byzantine authorities, exceeded 12,000, or double that of to-day.

St Athanasius was much interested in Mount Athos. He united the monks of the peninsula under the austere regulations of St Basil, and established the theocratic republic which has existed unchanged amidst all the changes and revolutions of adjacent countries for fourteen hundred years.

During many centuries, by favour of the Eastern emperors, the monks of Athos enjoyed immense revenues and wielded a dominant authority in Oriental Christendom. They acquired princely estates on the mainlands of both the Asiatic and European continents; and as they held the nominations to the wealthiest dioceses, the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries became subservient to them. At their pleasure they installed prelates and dethroned patriarchs. Men of genius, intellect, culture, and ambition entered their monasteries as the surest and speediest road to imperial influence and patronage.

When, at the fall of Constantinople, the Crescent surmounted the Cross, the Mount Athos rulers, with astute diplomacy, received the conquering Ottomans as welcome guests, and by payment of an annual tribute secured the protection of the Sultans. But it was the beginning of a change. Hitherto, each year, the Byzantine emperors had sent a gilded vessel with costly gifts to Athos; henceforward Athos had to send yearly a subsidy to Constantinople; and as the voice of the monks was no longer potent at Stamboul, the talent and energy of ambition sought other avenues to power. Gradually Athos fell outside the stream of human progress, becoming as lost to Western life. Enjoying quietly under Turkish suzerainty their large revenues, the monks forgot all else; to be suddenly awakened from the lethargy of nearly four centuries by the great Hellenic insurrection. Hoping for a recovery of their past pre-eminence in Oriental lands, they furnished much monetary aid to the Greek patriots; and when the termination of the long struggle left Mount Athos under the power of the Turks, these revenged themselves by invading the sacred peninsula, seizing the convents, and also confiscating most of the monastic properties in other parts of their empire. It tasked to the uttermost the monastic statesmanship to save the independence of the brethren and to retain even a relatively small portion of their ancient inheritance outside the peninsula.

A second heavy blow fell upon the monks of Athos in 1862, when their estates in Moldavia and Wallachia were likewise confiscated, entailing the loss of the major part of their remaining revenues.

The immense piles of buildings, and the costly objects of art yet left in the treasuries of the nine

hundred and fifty-three churches and twenty great convents of Athos, testify to its former paramount prestige, power, and wealth, and to the high esteem in which the potentates and aristocracy of other days held its sanctuaries. Relics of saints enshrined in gold and incrustated with jewels yet abound at Athos. In every monastery are valuable vases of jade, onyx, and porphyry; massive gold, silver, and ebony candlesticks and chandeliers; sacerdotal garments of costly brocades heavy with pearls, rubies, and emeralds; icons, crucifixes, crosses, and missals of ancient and elaborate artistic execution, covered with diamonds and other precious stones; mosaics so delicately done that powerful lenses are needed to trace their lines; and paintings seven hundred or eight hundred years old of yet vivid colours. In one convent is a large lemon-tree of silver, richly laden with golden fruit. The pulpits and stalls of the churches and chapels are of costly woods, curiously carved. The MSS. are full of elaborately illuminated characters and wondrously executed miniatures.

Amongst the literary treasures is a Geography of Ptolemy of the tenth century; another of Strabo, almost as old; the Botany of Dioscorides; a medical treatise of Ætius, physician to Justinian; and with almost innumerable other sacred relics are shown the right hand, covered with jewels, of St John Chrysostom, and a piece of the Cross encased in gold, presented by the Emperor Paleologus. The walls of the churches, vestibules, halls, and refectories are hung with valuable pictures, including many portraits of distinguished benefactors.

The most interesting frescoes are at Karyes, and are attributed to Manuel Panselinos, of whom all we know is that he lived about seven hundred years ago and accomplished single-handed for hagiort art a complete revolution. His fame at Athos is such that nearly every ancient picture of genius is ascribed to Panselinos; and the sole ambition of successive generations of painters for centuries has been to more closely copy their unique great master.

There are at present on the peninsula twenty large convents or monasteries, some counting their membership by hundreds; others, less fortunate now, with fewer members. Each convent is independent, enjoying its own revenues and administering its own domains; but all are united in a federal republic governed by a legislative council of twenty monks (one from each great convent), elected annually, and an executive Cabinet of four other monks, each elected annually by a group of five monasteries. The one selected by the elective group of the five principal communities (Lavra, Vatopedi, Chilandari, Yvion, and Gregoris) is president of the confederation. The common seal is divided into four parts, one part being entrusted to each member of the executive; so that the seal of the commonwealth can only be affixed to any document by unanimous action of the Cabinet.

The internal management of eleven of the monasteries is committed to a prior (elected yearly in each monastery), who wields the executive power, carrying on occasions of state an ebony cane and a golden apple as emblems of his office; he is assisted by three other officers, also annually chosen. In each of the nine other

monasteries an executive committee of three members is yearly selected by the oldest and leading monks; for important questions the whole electoral body of each community is assembled, but the committee of three carry into effect all decisions.

Subordinate to each of the twenty great convents is an inferior community, or 'Skyte,' which manages its own affairs and disposes of its own products. The forests, however, are reserved to the superior convents, and the Skytai also have to provide out of their local revenues the bulk of the annual tribute paid by the peninsula to the Sultan of Turkey.

Outside these communities are about five hundred small estates, occupying many of the most picturesque sites, bought by individual monks from the great convents, and worked for the purchaser's personal profit and pleasure. While independent in many respects, these estate-owners are under the monastic regulations as to diet, fasts, and prayers.

There are also numerous solitary anchorites scattered in caves and forest recesses. These hermits usually shun the approach of a stranger, hiding themselves amongst the rocks and thickets, or, if hard pressed by hunger, kneeling before him with extended hands asking alms. Some support themselves by wood-carvings, which they exchange at the convents for food; but the majority find it difficult to procure the simplest necessities of life.

The regime and rules of the monasteries are very severe. Meat is absolutely forbidden. Fish, cheese, and eggs are permitted. Each year has four long fasts, comprising together one hundred and fifty-four days, not counting the Wednesdays and Saturdays of the non-fasting weeks; during these fasts only one meal of salads, olives, and bread is allowed daily at noon.

The repasts are brief and without conversation, one of the brethren, seated in the middle of the refectory, reading from a pious book. Great hospitality exists throughout the peninsula, and travellers are cordially welcomed. Beds are unknown in the majority of the convents; but it is easy to sleep comfortably on the wooden divans covered with Oriental carpets and cushions.

For fourteen hundred years no woman has slept upon the Sacred Mountain. Their proscription is rigidly absolute; even the Turkish representative has to leave his harem outside the limits of the peninsula. Not women only, but females of all kinds are excluded, so far as the monkish power extends. No cow, she-goat, or even domestic hen is permitted on the holy territory.

Eggs are imported from Lemnos. The monastic device is: '*Gens aeterna ubi nunquam nascitur.*'

The monks are forbidden to cut either hair or beard; at one epoch no beardless brother was admitted.

Except three, all the establishments are of Greek origin. Two ancient convents are Servian; and one, more recent, is of Russian foundation. Free access is given by all the communities to any applicants not invalid, infirm, or too aged; but all who join must in some way share in the labours and submit implicitly to the regulations.

Every day at least eight hours, and every night two hours, must be devoted to prayers; during the lengthened fasts these hours of prayer extend to seventeen, or even eighteen, hours out of every twenty-four. While at prayers none are allowed to sit; consequently little strength is left for manual work, and less inclination for mental exertion. Except for the annual donations from the Czar, and the collections made by deputations of begging friars sent from Athos into the countries professing the orthodox faith, many of the convents on the peninsula would find it impossible to sustain themselves, notwithstanding their few wants, their meagre fare, and the marvellous fertility of their lands.

The monasteries are constructed like vast citadel-fortresses, with high towers and massive walls, on mountain-slopes or seaside cliffs. They follow no regular design, each adapting itself to the peculiar conformation of its site. One on the western shore—Samopetra—is perched upon an almost inaccessible rock. Flourishing vineyards surround the bases of the convent hills; the forests around yield plentiful supplies of nuts, which at present constitute the heaviest item of exports.

The tribute paid to Turkey is fourteen thousand francs yearly; this is in addition to the custom duties on foreign imports. The central seat of government is at the village of Karyes, near the middle of the peninsula. Bazaars for the sale of ecclesiastical images and objects, and workshops of artisans, are likewise at Karyes.

The most primitive monastery is that of Lavra, containing the venerated tomb of St Athanasius. The finest Greek establishment is the convent of Vatopedi, connected with which is the main market for the peninsular products.

The only Russian convent, 'Russiko,' is to-day, however, the wealthiest and the most progressive. It is strategically situated on the coast, and is increasing in every way each year. Its chiefs are young, active men—unlike the old monks, who usually by seniority rule the other monasteries; they are frequently changed, and are in constant communication with the Czar's representatives at Constantinople. This monastery of Russiko, with its safe and ample harbour, may yet play a prominent part in the future movements of the Russians in the Ægean countries.

DR MARTIN'S FURLOUGH.

CHAPTER II.

HE was certainly a pleasant fellow. At dinner he made himself remarkably agreeable, telling a profusion of quaint anecdotes of the peasantry in Ireland, where he had been quartered, with immense spirit and an inborn dramatic faculty. The slight prejudice—if that is not too strong a word—with which I had anticipated his coming grew faint and fainter as I listened to his amusing sallies; and yet the underthought running in my mind all the time was, that I had either met the man before or heard much about him from some friend.

Such impressions, when one cannot trace them down, are most annoying; and I sat trying to

grasp this elusive memory until my hostess observed my silence.

'You have tired Dr Martin out, Duance,' she remarked. 'To lie stretched out in a deck-chair for three weeks is a bad preparation for a long run over our hills.'

'So it is,' I admitted; 'but I am quite fresh enough to be amused by the capital stories we have been hearing. By the way, Major Hunter, it dwells in my mind that I have had the pleasure of meeting you before to-day. Is it so, do you think? Can you help my memory?'

'I think not,' he answered, looking straight into my eyes with a curious glitter in his own. 'I do not readily forget the faces I have once seen.'

'I was mistaken, then, of course,' I said. 'One encounters so many people in India that one ends by expecting to have met everybody in the world.'

'I hate India,' Hunter broke in, with more intensity than the occasion seemed to warrant; 'it is nothing but a gigantic charnel-house.'

'My dear Major,' Mrs Champneys protested, 'my beloved India!—the gayest and most delightful land on earth!'

'I say it is a charnel-house,' Hunter repeated, with rising voice. 'First a rotting mass of dead civilisations, dead armies, dead faiths, dead monarchies—and then the bones of ten generations of our blood, and not only their bones, but their hearts and souls, the better part of them, their hopes and aspirations, their fears and loves, their happiness on earth—yes, even their eternal salvation, all lie perishing together.'

We sat and stared at Hunter, as well we might; for his voice and manner were by no means what is usual at a dinner-table. There was a moment of awkward silence, broken by our hostess, who remarked as she gave the sign to her sister, 'How very differently two people will look at the same thing! Now, to me India is a ballroom.'

Champneys and I made gallant efforts to maintain a cheerful conversation when the ladies had left us. But Hunter was moody and disinclined to talk; and so, after sitting but a short time, we broke up, Champneys and Hunter going to the drawing-room, and I to the library on the plea of having letters to write.

I was not actually tired, but my long day on horseback had brought me to that state in which one loves to lie and bask. There was a noble fire in the library; I stretched myself out before it comfortably and lighted a cheroot, thinking all the while, with a degree of interest that rather surprised me, of the companion who had led me so splendidly all day long over the hills and across the combs. So she was to marry Hunter! That straightforward, downright girl was to be yoked with a man who was little more than a bundle of nerves and morbid fancies. As the smoke curled upwards from my cigar, I saw in its wreaths many a picture of their future life,

all tainted by the prejudice I had conceived; and I saw pictures, too, of a certain lonely bungalow at Secunderabad which was too large for me, and which would be such a different place if it had a mistress arranging its rooms or watching for me on the veranda.

I know this was not wise. I know it was not fair to let my thoughts run off in this direction when Champneys had in effect warned me that there was an understanding between Miss Merri-man and Hunter. But we are not all built in water-tight compartments, nor are our thoughts always under strict control; and really, if it is an offence to wish for what is out of reach, I fancy most men have transgressed at some period or other of their lives.

However, this train of thought was not a cheerful one; and I was not sorry when the door burst open with a bang—Champneys always moved about with the maximum of noise—and I was aroused by, 'Now then, Martin, wake up, old chap. You can't go to sleep here all evening; remember your duties to society. Come along! We're all going upstairs to play pool.'

I got up, nothing loth; for indeed my day-dreams had not been so pleasant that I had any wish to prolong them. In the hall Mrs Champneys was waiting for us; the others were already knocking the balls about. Hunter had recovered his cheerfulness; and our game of pool was very gay. It was followed by another; and then Miss Merriman declared she was tired of playing, and going to one of the three long windows which lighted the room, threw it wide open, letting in such a flood of moonlight and soft warm air that Mrs Champneys cried, 'What an exquisite night! Throw the window open wider, Duance. Let us go out on the balcony.'

'My dear, good woman,' her husband remonstrated, 'does one sit on balconies in November?' 'Certainly one does,' she retorted, 'when November gives us a June night. Come, Dr Martin, let me show you our view by moonlight; we are rather proud of it.'

Champneys shrugged his shoulders. 'Come, then, Hunter,' he said, 'let us show our wisdom by staying here and playing out our interrupted match. Martin, do at least see that my wife wears a shawl.'

On stepping out through the window I came in view of a sight as lovely as I have ever seen. Oatley is built, as I said, on the first slopes of the Quantock Hill. The whole wide valley between that range and the Blackdown lay before us—an expanse wide enough to possess at all times something of that sublimity which is often lacking in an English landscape, but now filled with wandering wreaths of mists which moved and gathered under the full radiance of the moon, adding a certain vagueness to all the outlines of the trees and hills, and making the distances appear well-nigh infinite. Far away on the plain beneath us the towers of Taunton town rose up gleaming with a mysterious brightness. A soft, intoxicating air moved in our faces, like the scent of spring-time; and there was a light whispering in the tree-tops—for the leaves hung late that year—which completed the illusion.

'Isn't that an evening to remember, Dr Martin?' asked a voice at my elbow. I had thought Mrs Champneys was beside me; but I

looked round and saw that Miss Merriman and I were alone.

'It certainly is,' I answered, 'and I shall not forget it; though, indeed, the whole day has been a memorable one for me.'

'Has it? Oh, your first stag-hunt! I remember. I am glad you enjoyed it so much.'

'In such company,' I said, 'I should have enjoyed a paper-chase.' Miss Merriman laughed.

'What a very gallant observation! If bachelor life in India breeds those courtly manners, we poor rustics at Oatley must acknowledge our inferiority.'

'Do you know what bachelor life in India breeds?' I asked, bending forward with a sudden reckless impulse which I could not restrain. 'Shall I tell you what it breeds?—what it really is that comes of that long loneliness?'

I think some spark of the sudden glow with which I spoke passed from me to her. But she checked me, like the true woman that she was, before I had time to lose myself.

'Would not that be a rather dreary story for me to hear?' she asked sweetly. 'There must be many things about your Indian experiences which are picturesque and merry. Do not let us spoil a sweet evening by talking of what could scarcely bring us any pleasure.'

Though this was said with great kindness, it effectually sobered me. The passionate words which were trembling on my lips died away. I stood amazed and not a little ashamed at the intoxication which had almost mastered me in the presence of this girl, so nearly a total stranger to me.

'Of course,' I said, controlling myself by an effort, 'I could talk to you by the hour of balls and water-parties, of picnics in the woods, and of palace entertainments. Of sport perhaps you have heard enough for one day. Suppose I were to tell you the story of the Black Mountain expedition—would that be amusing?'

'Above all things else!' she cried, clapping her hands. 'I did not know you were in that affair. John never told me.'

'Why should he?' I replied. 'My share in it was of no real importance. But it did happen that I got to know some things about it which not every one knows even now. You will stop me if I grow tedious?'

She nodded her head, and I began the tale of those great marches among the mountain-tops. Miss Merriman was an excellent listener, full of interest and intelligence, and showing by the few questions which she asked that she followed what I had to say with real excitement. I felt that I was talking well; and I know that my companion looked royally beautiful, bending forward now and then with parted lips and animated face, and eager questions that showed the story was real to her, the snowy precipices there before her eyes, and the fierce enemy swarming in her very sight down the mountain paths.

Any man would have been gratified by such an intensity of interest, and I do not pretend that I was insensible to it. Several times, however, as I was talking, I felt that some one was passing and repassing close behind me—an innocent proceeding, no doubt, but one that gave me a curious nervous feeling which I could hardly account for. I therefore turned my chair half round, and a

moment later perceived that it was Hunter who moved restlessly up and down in the intervals of his strokes. It would have been absurd to ask him not to do so; and yet the thing annoyed me so much that at last, without pausing in my tale, I turned and looked at him as he passed. He stopped short and looked me in the face with an expression such as I have never seen equalled for pure malignity. It was a black menace, a scowl of fury which contracted and darkened all his features into the aspect—I cannot otherwise describe it—of a crouching animal about to spring. His face worked; his eyes flamed with the wildest light ever seen in mortal man's. There was danger in him at that moment. I have seen such things before, and I know that the least wavering on my part would have brought him flying at my throat. I half rose therefore, and keeping my eyes fixed steadily on his, said easily, 'Hunter, I have left my cigar-case downstairs. Give me one of yours, will you?' The light remark, the call on his courtesy, brought Hunter to himself. He handed me his case with a pleasant smile, and saying significantly, 'I catch scraps of your conversation now and then,' he passed on to where Champneys was waiting for him. I sat down again; but the thread was broken. In the darkness I saw constantly Hunter's face flaming with insanity. My thoughts wandered from my story, my hold on my listener wavered, and at last, with a slight yawn which she vainly endeavoured to suppress, Miss Merriman said, 'I begin to feel it rather cold, Dr Hunter. Isn't it very late?'

'Very late indeed,' observed Champneys, who overheard her; 'you will not be allowed to come up here in the evenings, Miss Duance, unless you go to bed in proper time.'

'Proper time,' retorted she, 'is when one feels sleepy. But I see Ada nodding on the lounge up there; and as you men will doubtless think your honour concerned in staying up some hours later than we do, it will be well for every one if we go at once.'

ATLANTIC BOAT VOYAGES.

By W. B. LORD.

THE successful voyage recently made by two men in the rowing-boat *Fox*, from New York to Havre, *via* St Mary, Isles of Scilly, marks a new era in the navigation of small vessels across the Atlantic Ocean. Hitherto such hazardous trips have been undertaken in small craft by the aid of sails or steam. For sixty-two days these two men—who, by the way, are Norwegians—doggedly stuck to their oars. Being favoured with excellent weather, they escaped a fate which must otherwise have inevitably overtaken them. They left New York at 5 p.m. on the 6th June 1896, in the *Fox*, a clinker-built boat, eighteen feet long, five feet wide, and twenty-three inches deep, and drawing four inches of water. She was designed by her two navigators, and built of cedar wood especially for the purpose. She was provisioned for sixty days, and carried sixty gallons of water. Rowing away from port amid the cheers of thousands of people assembled to witness their departure, they proceeded safely until the 10th of July, when, at nine o'clock in the evening, a heavy sea struck and capsized the boat, throwing the two men into the water.

They were caught under, but soon got clear, having life-lines attached to the life-belts which they continually wore. These lines were made fast to the boat. After considerable manœuvring the boat was righted, and getting one on each side, the men got on board again without much difficulty. Baling the craft out occupied their attention for some time. Owing to this misfortune, all the provisions, sea anchor and cable, cooking utensils, signal lights, and various articles not lashed to the boat were lost. During the same night the boat was several times filled with water, but with some exertion was kept afloat. They pulled two pairs of oars during the day, and when the weather was moderate, relieved each other every three hours during the night. Shortly after, the weather improved, and, with but few variations, the wind continued fair until the voyage was completed. Fortunately for them, passing vessels replenished them with provisions, so that the men did not suffer in this respect. Their health all the way was exceedingly good, despite the inconvenience of wet clothes and want of sleep and exercise. Curiously enough, this trip was embarked upon owing to the success attending the journey of one Captain Adolph Freitsch, in a schooner-rigged boat, two years previously. The doings of this navigator will be recorded in their proper place later on. This stimulated the two hardy Norwegians to beat the record then made by rowing across the Atlantic.

Little did Henry May think what a dangerous precedent he was setting when he crossed from the Bermudas to England in the year 1522. He had been shipwrecked on one of the largest of those islands, which at that time was quite uninhabited. He evidently had no intention of emulating the deeds of one who subsequently gained world-wide notoriety by remaining on the island a number of years. He therefore collected materials from the wreck of his own ship for building a small boat in which he made the first recorded voyage across the Atlantic. This hazardous feat was also accomplished by Sir George Somers in 1609, when cast upon the same islands. How many persons have lost their lives since that time in similar enterprises of a far less worthy character will never be known, but it may prove of interest to mention a few voyages which have been undertaken in small vessels across the Atlantic during recent years.

In 1876 Alfred Johnson left Gloucester, Mass., in a small open boat, twenty feet in length, and in fifty-seven days reached Liverpool. However, he appears to have had a rough time of it. When about 300 miles from the coast of Ireland, Johnson was caught in a hurricane, which caused his boat to capsize. He managed after considerable trouble to right his tiny craft, and some time later he spoke a passing vessel and obtained some bread and fresh water. Johnson is said to have maintained his health throughout, though he suffered much from want of sleep.

Early in the following year Captain Thomas Crapo and his wife crossed the Atlantic in the *New Bedford*, named after the city from which they started. They appear to have been well occupied in looking after their small craft while on their way, and the captain of a steamer which passed them in mid-ocean suggested that the pair should come on board; but the offer was declined. After many thrilling adventures, the *New Bedford*—

another twenty-foot boat—arrived safely in Mount's Bay, Cornwall, after a voyage lasting thirty-nine days.

The *Red, White, and Blue*, a somewhat larger boat than those already mentioned, successfully crossed from New York to Margate. The crew consisted of two men; and they were accompanied by a dog, which died soon after reaching land. This boat was afterwards placed on view at the Crystal Palace.

The next in order of date is that of the *Nautilus*, a marvellous achievement up to this time—1878. She was only fifteen feet in length, six feet seven inches wide, and two feet three inches deep, and it looked a mere toy. Forty-five days after leaving Boston the *Nautilus* reached the Lizard, greatly to the joy of the two men on board, for their cabin was too small to admit of either sufficient shelter or restful sleep. At times they were without rest for a whole week. Day and night they wore the same wet clothes.

But it must not be imagined that all who have embarked on these extremely dangerous voyages have succeeded in bringing them to a successful termination. A small boat called the *Dark Secret*, which left Boston in June 1888, was picked up in mid-Atlantic by the sailing-ship *Nar*. Captain Andrews, the only occupant of the boat, presented a wretched spectacle. Salt water had turned his coat almost white, and he was scarcely able to speak, from weakness, or move his limbs, which were stiff and sore. The captain of the *Nar*, seeing his pitiable condition, pointed out to him the folly of attempting to proceed any farther, and invited him to come on board, which offer was accepted. Andrews said that for two months he had not tasted any warm food or drink, and that his provisions and clothes were soaked with water. He had slept very little. Sharks and whales continually hovered around the boat, and several times he was nearly capsized. At night, when attempting to sleep, he used the anchor as a drag to keep the boat's head to the sea.

Another instance of audacious ocean navigation was the *Mermaid*, with one sole occupant. In this case not only did the centre-board refuse to work when out at sea, but the boat itself capsized in mid-ocean. At this time the man on board was squeezed up in his little cockpit, which had a wooden cover to it opening upwards. When the boat capsized he tried to push this open, but the weight of the boat above kept it fast. He took a deep breath and found that there was still air in the little hole. He then set practically to work, and, making himself as upright as possible, leaned against the ribs of the boat. This relieved the pressure, and helped by the water which had found its way in, he pushed the trap open with his feet and got out, and with the greatest difficulty managed to get on to the keel, from which he was rescued by a passing vessel.

A year or two since Captain Gardiner left Sherbrooke, Nova Scotia, in the *Flying Dutchman*, bound for Falmouth. This boat was only fifteen feet long by five feet wide. He was spoken several times by passing vessels, to the masters of which he gave thrilling accounts of his experiences in several heavy gales. Upon one occasion he was washed overboard by a heavy sea which broke over the little craft, and with

much difficulty managed to get on board again. Ultimately the master of a British barque endeavoured to persuade him to abandon the attempt. The reply given upon this occasion was, 'No. If I don't go to the bottom, I intend to reach Falmouth. Fame or manslaughter?' A few months later the wreck of a craft similar in appearance to that of the *Flying Dutchman* was passed about nine hundred miles due west of Gibraltar, and nothing more was ever heard of Captain Gardiner.

Peculiar interest attaches to the fate of the *Neversink*. She was a small boat of unique construction, invented by an American, who claimed that she was unsinkable. She made one good passage across the Atlantic to France; subsequently she returned to America, and again left for this side. This time she belied her name.

It is worthy of note that, beyond the passages made by the Viking 'ship' and the Columbus caravels to the Chicago Exhibition in 1893, no other instances—coming within the scope of this article—are on record of recent date in which small vessels have successfully reached America from this side of the ocean. In 1886 Christian Christiansen attempted to sail in a little open boat, nineteen feet in length, called the *Ocean*, from Glasgow to New York. When about two hundred and seventy miles from Newfoundland, he was compelled to give up and seek shelter on board a homeward-bound British ship. Previous to doing this, however, nearly everything had been washed out of the boat, including the nautical instruments. This man afterwards became second mate on board the Viking 'ship,' and no doubt the experience previously gained proved of good service when making the second and successful passage.

A Nottingham enthusiast was announced, in April 1894, as about to cross the Atlantic during that summer, but so far nothing further has been heard of the matter. It was stated that he had occupied himself for a whole year in the construction of a boat in which to make the experiment. The vessel was described as being made of iron, entirely of his own design and make, ten feet six inches long, three feet wide, and two feet six inches deep, thus being the smallest craft ever announced to make such an adventurous voyage. She had what is known as a 'whaleback' deck, and the cabin, lighted by glass windows at the side, was completely water-tight when closed, fresh air being obtained by pipes. In the event of the tiny craft being overturned, the inventor claimed that she would automatically right herself. A mast ten feet in length was fitted from the fore-deck, with jib and mainsail, and additional motive-power was to be supplied by a geared hand-screw.

Early last year a native of Dundee, who in June 1895 was picked up in the middle of the Atlantic while endeavouring in a small boat to cross from New York to Queenstown, resolved to undertake an equally daring adventure. It was stated that he had commissioned a Dundee boat-builder to construct an open boat, in which he intended to sail from Dundee to New York, accompanied by another man. The boat was to be somewhat over twenty feet long and thoroughly seaworthy. So far the scheme remains in abeyance.

Before concluding, some reference must be made to an act which, for courage, endurance, and daring, has only been eclipsed by the crew

of the *Fox*. This was the voyage made by Captain Adolph Freitsch in the *Nina*. He designed and built the vessel entirely himself—hull, rigging, sails, and gear being altogether his own workmanship. Practically she was an open boat, and constructed upon the centre-board principle, her frame pieces being all of straight wood. She was schooner-rigged, carried six sails, and measured only thirteen tons. Leaving Milwaukee on the 26th April 1894, he sailed down the American Lakes, through the Erie Canal to the Hudson, and arrived at New York city on the 5th July. This in itself was a journey which many would hesitate before undertaking, but to the hardy skipper of the *Nina* it was only one of the trifles of the voyage. A month later he sailed again, and made Queenstown thirty-four days afterwards. One incident of the passage is worthy of record. A heavy sea split his rudder, rendering it useless. Half-way down the rudder-post he rigged gear, upon which he lay, and bored a couple of holes through the after lower part of the rudder. Lines were then rove and brought over to the quarter. By hauling one rope and slackening the other he managed to steer the *Nina* for nearly two thousand miles. Later on the vessel sprang a leak, and at one period matters became very serious. From Queenstown the *Nina* sailed to Dublin, then to Liverpool, next to Belfast, which port she subsequently left for Glasgow. This proved to be her last cruise, for she ran ashore on the west side of the island of Bute, and became a total wreck. This happened in November 1895. Captain Freitsch afterwards returned to Milwaukee, constructed another little vessel at a cost of £250, started on a voyage round the world, but abandoned the trip at the end of a few days' cruising. No doubt the idea was to imitate Captain Slocum, who has now completed his voyage round the world in the sloop *Spray*.

Other important boat voyages have been made across the Atlantic, but enough has been said to show that such experiments have a fascination for some hardy mariners, or they would not be so frequently attempted. The question of their utility is one upon which the writer is unable to decide, especially in view of several of them being made to advertise the products of huge mercantile concerns, and to furnish schemes for the sporting fraternity to wager large sums of money upon. Apart from this, a history of such adventures as have been described will always prove of interest.

THE DEFENCE OF SAN ANDRES.

By HAROLD BENDLOSS, Author of *Rising of the Dracma*.

ON the fringe of the wild Sahara, several hundred miles north of the river Senegal, stood an ancient Spanish fort. Its gray walls rose just above high-water mark on the thundering surf-swept beach, near the mouth of a ravine filled with scorching white stones and hot dust where for a week or two once a year a little water trickled down; and this is what the Arabs call a *wady* or river. Whose hands raised the massive stones into the shape of a hollow square, with walls twenty feet high and six feet thick, or fitted the solid iron-bound door, no man knew. Most probably it was the work of Diego de Herrera or his followers,

who vainly tried to force the yoke of Spain upon the freest people in the world—the desert Arabs—four hundred years ago.

No doubt the ancient walls had looked down upon many a grim fight in past days, for time after time the Spaniards attempted to gain a footing in this wild region—why no one but themselves could ever understand; but invariably their soldiers were driven into the sea, or died of starvation and disease in their isolated forts.

To this day it is a No-man's-land, for the dominions of the Moorish Sultan cease at Wady Draa, far to the north, and the shadowy claims of Spain are laughed at by Arabs at least as white and considerably finer in physique than the inhabitants of the Iberian peninsula. These do what is right in their own eyes, and move about from oasis to oasis with large flocks of sheep, followed by tribes of brown-skinned Berbers, their vassals, and trains of negro slaves from the far Soudan.

It is a popular delusion that the Sahara 'desert' is a waste of hot sand. There is sand there, plenty of it; but only a few days' march behind the western coast-line lie oases, many acres in extent, where are clustering date-palms, fields of rustling maize and barley, and apparently numberless flocks of sheep; while the Arab sheikhs wear heavy jewels of native gold.

The wandering tribes, however, cherish a deadly hatred against all Europeans (said to have been caused by the wanton cruelty of the early Spaniards, who, during the fifteenth century, penetrated far inland), and have shown over and over again that they will permit neither trader nor explorer to traverse their land. Many a Spanish officer and British adventurer has found this out to his cost of late years, and at present the way is resolutely barred against Western commerce.

Now, it came about that some years ago a Spanish colonel of infantry, Don Rosendo de Aguilar, and many other names, was sent with twenty-five soldiers, Cazadores Canarios, or half-trained conscript militia from the neighbouring Canary Islands, to reoccupy this post for Spain.

Things soon went badly with the little garrison, for news that the Sultan's soldiers were driving the hated foreigners out of Morocco travelled south across many a stony range and waste of hot sand, and Berber tribes who at first brought in sheep and dates were driven away by the Arabs, and provisions grew scarce. The well went nearly dry, and the water that remained was full of mud and sand; while at frequent intervals bands of Arabs swept past on their small white horses, with long blue tunics, and white burnouses streaming in the wind, and saluted the Spanish ensign, which waved its blood and gold above the fort, with showers of slugs from their long-barrelled guns. Then dysentery broke out, and one by one six men gave up their lives in agony, and were buried in the hot sand.

Once or twice, by means of a chance fishing-schooner which dropped anchor off the fort to sell *bacalao*, or sun-dried sea-bream, Don Rosendo sent a despatch to the governor at Teneriffe, begging for reinforcements, food, and medicine. But as day after day passed by and there was neither welcome gleam of white canvas nor dingy trail of smoke to break the azure semicircle of ocean, the Commandante grew sad and bitter at heart as he paced the ramparts with anxious eyes turned seawards, looking for help which never came.

So provisions grew scarcer and scarcer, until at last a handful of *gofio*, which is meal made from roasted maize, an ounce or two of salty *bacalao*, and a pint of slimy water was each man's share. Soon more famine-worn corpses were buried at night; while the Commandante, with true Spanish inconsistency, knelt each morning before his silver crucifix and prayed that succour might be sent, and afterwards went out into the hot sunshine and stamped up and down the ramparts, biting his long white moustache and cursing the government by all the saints in heaven and the fiends of the bottomless pit.

At length two Berbers, who, owing to some mistake as to the ownership of certain sheep, had joined the little garrison, begged leave to make a journey inland, in the hope that a once-friendly tribe might be induced to send them a few dates or *fanegas* of barley. It seemed certain that they would never return, yet the need was desperate, and the officer agreed, for hunger knows no law.

Standing in the clear southern moonlight, the garrison watched their comrades disappear into the black shadow of the ravine, then emerge again into the brightness, and grow smaller and smaller as they marched east over the stony plain, until at last they appeared no more than two black specks crawling across a sea of silver light.

Eight days passed. Then one morning, just as the glowing sun swang up through a purple haze, and the sleepy sentry yawned and rubbed his eyes as he brushed the night dew from his rifle-barrel, there was a dull clattering of unshod hoofs in the dry ravine. A moment later a band of swarthy horsemen swept past the walls of the fort and disappeared amid the rocks, while the startled soldier fired his rifle wildly into the air. Afterwards he stooped to pick up a basket of palm-leaves which one of the Arabs had hurled over the wall. Hastily buckling on his sword-belt, the Commandante rushed out upon the battlements, while the Cazadores swarmed half-naked into the court below, catching up their rifles as they went.

The man stammered out what he had seen. Don Rosendo, listening gravely, unfasted the packet, and took out two small pieces of barley-bread and a strip of palm-leaf with characters inscribed upon it, doubtless the work of some learned sheikh. Having served much time in Morocco, the officer understood Arabic, and he slowly read aloud: 'To the infidel—greeting but no peace. Thy men are slain; they sold their lives for a piece of bread. We are just: here is the price; and if it be the will of Allah, we will come in due time and slay you also.'

The Cazadores clustering below heard every word as it rose clearly on the still air, and a

growl of hatred ran round the court as the Commandante took up the barley-cakes reverently.

'Poor fellows! they too died for Spain; and, if I live, this shall be placed beneath the Cazadores' colours in the cathedral of Santa Cruz for a memorial of them,' he said, and, looking down, saw by their flashing eyes and contracted brows that the soldiers would settle the account against their foes to the uttermost farthing when their time should come.

Two days afterwards patches of raw blue, moving here and there against the white glare of sun-baked earth and stones, showed that the enemy were at last investing the fort. Every now and then little puffs of smoke drifted out across the hot dust, and a handful of slugs flattened themselves viciously against the parapet or tore through the silken folds of the flag. Whenever a man showed himself within range, the Cazadores fired in return; but the Arabs who had crawled into gunshot of the fort were mostly invisible, for, by long practice, they are adepts in the art of concealing themselves behind a stone or euphorbia bush, and occasionally even wriggle out of sight into the sand.

Towards afternoon, while the defenders crouched down upon the hot stones under the burning sun, Lieutenant Carlos called out, '*Viva la España!*' and sprang to his feet. Every man rose, and looking seawards, saw a patch of white canvas far out on the gleaming water. As they did so two guns flashed somewhere along the edge of the ravine, and a soldier dropped his rifle, which clattered upon the stones; then, clutching at his side, sank down a limp heap in the shadow of the wall.

The Cazadores dropped out of sight like the furry denizens of a warren at the crack of a double barrel. Don Rosendo, however, was an old soldier who had suffered many things in the fever swamps of the Philippines, and had seen his men die round him like flies beneath the *prieto* by muddy Cuban lagoons. So, being far too knightly a gentleman to show any trace of hurry, he walked leisurely and erect towards the sergeant who knelt beside the still figure, and asked, 'Is he hard hit?' '*Muerto completamente*—quite dead,' was the answer; and the Commandante passed slowly towards the shelter of a turret, feeling that he would give much to meet the enemy hand to hand; though he knew that, should the defenders sally out, every man would go down before the accurate aim of hidden marksmen. Anxiously the garrison watched the sail grow larger and larger, gasping for breath as they crouched in the scanty shadow, while the thin stream of blood, which at first trickled slowly across the scorching stones, dried up into little scaly flakes, and whirled away down the rush of the strong trade-wind.

At last, with bitter disappointment and sinking hearts, they saw it was only a tiny schooner, a *bacalao* fisher. When sunset came the *Celaje* dropped anchor behind the reef, and her big launch, with six men in it, at once pulled ashore. All safely reached the fort, in spite of long-range firing; for the Arabs, having the fear of the two brass guns before their eyes, dared not venture too near in a solid body. When Salvador Herrera, master, entered the square, he found himself in the presence of a dozen sun-scorched,

ragged soldiers, hollow-cheeked and worn by famine and sleepless nights, while the Commandante, leaning heavily on his sword, greeted him with a quiet smile.

'You bring us good news, I trust—despatches, doubtless?' said the officer; but the seaman answered:

'Señor, to my sorrow, I have no word; the gunboat *Conde* lies at Santa Cruz, but there are no orders for her to sail. I can take a despatch back to Tenerife or embark your men in the *Celaje*.'

Don Rosendo's face darkened and his fingers closed tightly round his sword-hilt, while the captain grew red, and continued, stammering:

'I am but a plain man, and know little of these things. If, therefore, you desire them, such poor provisions as are in the schooner are at your command.'

More than one of the Cazadores cast a wistful glance at the tall masts of the schooner, sweeping to and fro across the saffron and orange of the sunset. For a space the Commandante also looked seaward in silence, his eyes following the trembling line of ruddy light across the rolling water, until he saw again in fancy his *quinta* in the sunny vale of Orotava. The burning sand and red dust of Africa faded away, and instead the white cone of the great peak of Tenerife shone against the azure sky; while beneath the pine-woods which clothe its slopes, Villa Orotava nestled among feathery palms, groves of orange-trees, and vineyards, with the odour of roses, heliotrope, and jasmine filling the scented air—a place of wine and sunshine, watered by snow-fed streams and refreshed by sparkling fountains.

Then a rifle-butt grated on the pavement, and the Commandante was once more a soldier in the heat of the Sahara. Drawing up his tall figure, he looked round at the waiting soldiers, and his voice was sharp and clear:

'My children, I have hidden nothing from you, for we share a common peril; but while a stone of the fort stands together I stay, to live or die for Spain. Now we have provisions to last until the gunboat comes, and strong walls for shelter, it is not a hard thing to hold out against a handful of rascally Arabs. Besides, they have your comrades' blood on their hands; and the eyes of the famine-stricken soldiers flashed as they shouted, '*Viva la España!*'

Next morning the *Celaje*, after landing a few sacks of *gofo* and *bacalao*, with a barrel of water, put to sea carrying the Commandante's despatch. The garrison, with sinking hearts, watched her grow smaller and smaller, until her white canvas seemed no larger than a seabird's wing; but clenched teeth and set faces told of a stern determination to play the man when the end came. Then the boat vanished out of sight, and they were utterly alone once more.

Slowly the weary hours dragged by. The sun rose higher and poured down its pitiless heat at noon, then sank towards the western horizon; and when at length he dipped beneath the verge, ocean and plain gleamed white in the moonlight. Every man stood armed at his post, but the foe made no sign until dawn next day, when long lines of Arabs, mounted both on camels and horses, were seen crossing the sand, some in blue tunics or *haiques*, while the fluttering of white

robes showed that others were a tribe from the interior.

Then the two old brass guns, cast in Seville two hundred years ago, with quaint devices of lions and castles across the breech (for half the Spanish possessions are 'defended'—save the mark!—with antiquated weapons of this pattern), were carefully loaded with old iron and loose stones, and trained to command the gate. Lieutenant Carlos smiled grimly as he knelt down and sighted each gun so that the charge should strike the ground some fifty yards from the walls.

Soon the horsemen were lost to sight among the hills; then they reappeared on foot, armed with their beautiful Arab guns, the fine Damascus barrels of which are often inlaid with gold, and the stocks cunningly dovetailed out of hard wood and ivory. Where they are made no one seems to know, but they probably come overland thousands of miles. The ways of the East are peculiar, and some of the Soudanese raiders who were killed when Samori attempted to invade Sierra Leone were armed with swords which appeared to be the work of artificers in far-away Persia and northern India.

Down the sides of the hills and over the plain spread the little specks of blue and white; and the Cazadores, who were marksmen before they were soldiers, resting their rifle-barrels on the battlements, followed them through the sights. Every now and then, when the soldier's grasp tightened round the stock and the heavy barrel shot upwards as the red sparks left its muzzle, a blue-clad figure rolled down the steep slope of the ravine, and lay still in the sun-glare; while handfuls of slugs and small stones whistled round the heads of the defenders. This was very pleasant to the Cazadores. It was with grim satisfaction they ran the slide up to five hundred yards, and saw the living target roll over and clutch at the sand, or crawl away like a wounded hare for the shelter of a euphorbia bush; but it was too good to last. By-and-by the Arabs spread themselves out one by one behind every bush and stone, and began to fire steadily in return. When they had all found suitable lurking-places and got their range, scarcely a rifle-barrel could show itself above the wall without a shower of missiles rattling about it; for, unlike the negro, every Arab is more or less a marksman.

About this time Carlos, who was kneeling behind the parapet, firing as hard as he could push the cartridges into the chamber at a clump of bushes, out of which he had already seen three Arabs drag themselves when the bullets ripped through the thin screen, opened the breech of his rifle to cool, and wiped the perspiration out of his eyes. As he did so he heard a pattering sound in a transverse gully, and listened eagerly.

'Going to rush us on horseback—the fools!' he said; then shouted, 'Pedro and Blas, stand by the levers.'

Three men crouched round the brass gun with their handspikes. The officer fixed percussion-tube and lanyard, and a swarm of horsemen swept out of the ravine, brandishing their guns and galloping at full speed towards the fort.

'Crack—crack—crack' went the rifles on the

wall, and several figures rolled out of the saddle, to be stamped to death by their comrades' horses.

'More to the left, Number 1,' said Carlos; and as he looked down the sights, a confused mass of lathering horses, blue and white tunics, swarthy faces, and glittering eyes filled the V-shaped notch.

'One more turn to the screw—steady that—fire!'

The soldier with the lanyard wrapped around his wrist swept his arm to his side. 'Bang' went the gun, and a long tongue of red flame shot out, a hollow ring of vapour floating upwards where it ceased. Then a rolling cloud of white smoke drifted across the ramparts. When it cleared, a cluster of struggling horses rolled in the sand. Here and there a brown arm, writhing out from beneath its white tunic, caught up little handfuls of hot dust, while shattered human forms lay rigid and still among the wounded beasts. The rest of the cavalry were safe again in the ravine before the eddying smoke gave the riflemen a chance to pick them off.

This was a severe lesson, and no more rushes were made; but the steady fire all round three sides of the fort, as the foe crawled nearer and nearer, was worse for the besieged. It is hard to make satisfactory shooting with only a puff of smoke from behind a stone for a mark, and the slugs whistled so thick through every embrasure that no man dared show his head above the parapet. So all day long the smoke of battle rolled across the burning sand, while the defenders crouched down upon the hot ramparts, gasping for breath and parched with thirst; and when at last the scorching day faded into night, three bodies lay still on the stones below, and there were but eight men left.

'Get the tackles and lower the smaller gun into the square' said Don Rosendo; 'the door is but wood, and they may force it in the darkness.' So, with difficulty, the ancient weapon was placed on the ground and trained on the door, loaded to the muzzle with whatever odd missile could be found.

When the worn-out soldiers reascended, although the moon had not yet risen, the starlight showed a line of dark objects leaving the ravine.

'Camels now, señor. Will they not learn?' said Carlos.

'This time they bring fire,' answered the Commandante; and as the younger man looked again, he made out that each beast carried a load of what appeared to be dried euphorbia bushes, and the plain was dotted with dark figures, all making for the fort.

'Now comes the end,' said Don Rosendo through his teeth, as he drew his sword.

With fingers clenched round their rifle-stocks, the handful of soldiers watched their foes drawing nearer and nearer while they heard their hearts beat, the lieutenant stooping motionless over his gun.

For a space not a shot was fired—the light was too dim and the distance too great. There was only the soft rustling of garments and the tread of padded feet to break the silence, until, with loud shouts, the Arabs on foot dashed forward, and the drivers urged the camels towards

the gate of the fort at their fast, lumbering gullo.

The chaos converged some hundred yards away, and a solid mob of men and beasts thundered towards the door. Then a line of fire crackled along the embrasures, and the lieutenant's voice rang out above the din. A corporal wrapped the lanyard of the gun round his wrist and flung out his arm.

There was a deafening crash, with a jarring ring in it, and while the murderous charge swept down the foes outside, Carlos fell forward across his gun, slain by the bursting of the honeycombed muzzle.

Amid the wild confusion, gurgling and screaming of wounded camels, and groans of dying men, the Arabs swarmed up to the gate; piles of brushwood were lighted, and a broad sheet of red flame rose up outside the walls. Sword in hand the Commandante encouraged the remnant of his men, who fired cartridge after cartridge until the rifle-breeches burned their fingers. Then, as the gate began to sink upon its hinges, they descended into the courtyard, and stood with bayonets fixed beside the gun, the firelight shining on their set faces and the bright sword-blade of their leader.

Amid a shower of sparks the door swung down, and for a moment the foes paused, then swept forward in a solid mass through the thickness of the walls. But no man crossed the threshold alive, for the gun poured out its shattering charge and the foremost Arabs went down like grass before a scythe, while those in the rear turned and fled for their lives. Presently the eddying smoke drifted out through the archway, and when he saw that there was no living being within gunshot of the fort, wiping the smoke, grime, and perspiration from his brow, the Commandante leaned feebly against the wall.

The little garrison will never forget that night. For what seemed long ages they lay upon the parapet with staring eyes turned towards the dark ravine, expecting certain death when daylight came. At length the sun rose, but beyond a dropping fire at intervals, the foe made no sign, and towards the close of a nerve-trying day a trail of black smoke appeared, like a dingy cloud on the verge of the western sea.

The Arabs clustered together out of rifle-shot on the summit of a low ridge, doubtless speculating on what it might be. Later two tall spars and the tip of a funnel rose into sight, and a hoarse '*Viva!*' went up from the men as, putting down his glasses with a great sigh of relief, the Commandante declared it to be the gunboat *Conde* from Teneriffe.

An hour afterwards she let go two anchors off the fort, rolling wildly on the trade-wind sea. Three white launches splashed into the water and pulled ashore, while the last of the Arabs could be dimly seen crossing the plain amid a cloud of dust.

So the defence of the Castillo de San Andres came to an end; for, in accordance with instructions, the few survivors were embarked and the fort abandoned. The Spanish authorities maintained such secrecy about the matter as they could; but details leaked out, and not long afterwards the remains of the fort were seen. The solid walls had been wrenched apart and the massy stones lay half-buried in the hot sand.

How Arab and Berber had managed this without the aid of gunpowder, which is a scarce commodity with them, it is hard to say; but all that now remains of the little fort are two tottering towers and a shapeless heap of smoke-blackened stones, standing alone in a dreary waste of hot sand, for a memento of the invincible garrison.

THE SUBMERGED FOREST AT LEASOWE.

MIDWAY between the Mersey and the Dee, on that bare and unlovely shore which is the only frontage to the sea possessed by the county of Cheshire, lies a spot of ground which teems with curious interest. It is not well known, for it lies in a lonely situation, and has no striking outward features to arrest the attention of the few who pass that way. The coast-line is low and insignificant. A sandstone cliff of no great altitude which juts out on the north corner of the promontory dies away into a range of sandhills, by which the land is so ill defended from encroachment of the sea that a long embankment has been built protecting that portion of the meadow-flats which was in most danger from the scour of the tide.

At the south end of this sea-wall the smooth expanse of sand is broken by a mass of what looks like black mud, stretching for perhaps half a mile along the shore, and washed into pools by the action of the tide, which covers it twice a day. It is only at low water that this black mass can be examined; but when the sea has retreated, as it does for a great distance on this flat coast, a very small amount of attention reveals the fact that it is not mud but peat which lies here underneath the water—green leaves, brown twigs, ferns, moss and lichen, all the lush growth of a noble forest overthrown and rotting together in one indistinguishable ruin, among which a few shattered stumps and roots of trees still remain in witness of what the forest was before the ocean burst in and overwhelmed it.

It is a curious and rather melancholy sight to see the debris of this great forest lying prone on the waste sea-coast. Such a scene, however, can be witnessed in many places round the shores of Great Britain, and the Leasowe forest would deserve no particular description were there not other circumstances of interest connected with it. What renders it remarkable is, that on this spot the most bewildering finds of antiquities have been made that ever perplexed an archæologist.

Many years ago the present writer, then a boy, was spending a few days at a little watering-place three or four miles distant from the Leasowe forest. A great storm had recently blown itself out, and the shore was littered with an unusual number of fragments of peat torn away from Leasowe and cast up along the water-line. For the most part these blocks must have lain washing about in the sea for a long time, since they were rounded by the action of the water, like flattened pebbles. One rather larger than the rest was lying by itself. A kick broke it open; and there, lying embedded in the soft black earth, was a Roman coin. It was only slightly defaced; the head was that of the Emperor Constantine, and the inscription was easily legible.

It was not then generally known—possibly it is not now—that the submerged forest is a treasure-house of antiquities. Stories were occasionally in circulation respecting wonderful things which had been found there; but they were very generally set down as romances, or, at the best, as quite exceptional and isolated pieces of good fortune. The rather remarkable incident just mentioned, however, naturally stimulated a boy's desire to search farther for himself; and the result of an afternoon spent in groping among the pools on the surface of the peat was the discovery of three coins—namely, two Roman ones and a silver penny of Edward III., together with a curious amber amulet. A second expedition produced two Roman coins and a bronze brooch, or fibula, with an ingenious fastening; a third was rewarded by more coins and a silver brooch of very ancient pattern. In fact, out of some dozen expeditions, not one was barren of results.

Now there are two curious observations to be made in regard to these relics of the past: firstly, that they have been found in most astonishing numbers; and secondly, that they are not confined to any one age, but range from almost the earliest days of the Roman conquest of these islands down to a period within the last two centuries.

Canon Hume, who in the year 1863 published a careful and interesting work upon the Leasowe forest, had before him from various collections no less than three thousand articles which had been recovered from the peat within twenty years. At the same time he obtained information which led him to conclude that at least as many more had been found, but lost again through carelessness or want of comprehension of their intrinsic interest. Large as these numbers are, the storehouse shows few signs of exhaustion. It rarely happens that a careful searcher returns empty-handed; and, as has just been shown, it was within the capacity of a schoolboy, possessing no antiquarian knowledge, to discover a considerable number of articles of value to an archaeologist.

Nothing more is necessary than a careful search among the stones at the bottom of the pools, or a slight disturbance of the surface of the peat with a stick. On one or two occasions a rare coin was discovered sticking up erect in the bog earth, and some are found simply lying on it as if they had but just been dropped.

It is obviously very difficult to account for the presence of antiquities in such vast numbers in this submerged forest; and the difficulty becomes bewildering when it is noticed that Roman remains are scarcely more numerous than British or later English. Seventeen hundred years at least divide the earliest from the latest finds. Such a series of objects one might expect to disinter from the foundations of some ancient city which had been powerful and populous for two thousand years. Had these coins, these battered ornaments of cunning workmanship, these spears once worn by knights in panoply—had all these relics been dug up in London or York, there would have been no ground for surprise. But here, on this desolate sea-coast, where not a house or a living creature is in sight, one looks round in vain for any traces of even an ancient settlement, but finds absolutely none. There is nothing but the open sea-shore, and the water

lapping over the black earth which was once a forest.

Many archaeologists have been baffled by the problem; and since attention was first drawn to the antiquities some seventy years ago, many solutions more or less improbable have been suggested. One sapient thinker invents the wreck of an imaginary ship stored with a museum of antiquities collected in other places, and now restored by the ocean which swallowed them. This is the mere wildness of conjecture, and serves only to show the greatness of the difficulty which drives calm observers to such desperate explanations. Another and far more reasonable suggestion is that these articles may have been lost in the forest by travellers; and though at first sight it may appear that casual accidents of this nature could never account for the huge number of objects which have been found, leaving out of question all those which are doubtless lying still embedded in the peat, yet this theory probably advances us some distance towards the truth, and is by no means to be lightly dismissed.

There were, indeed, well-travelled paths through that great forest which formerly covered the whole of the Cheshire peninsula so densely that, in the words of an ancient rhyming couplet, 'From Woodside (more commonly known as Birkenhead) to Hilbree, the squirrels leap from tree to tree.' Hilbree is an island off the mouth of the river Dee. It is in full sight from Leasowe, and from very early ages other folk than squirrels made their way continuously in that direction. For a very large part of the traffic between northern England and Ireland passed this way to take ship at one point or another in the neighbourhood of Hilbree; sometimes, indeed, at Chester, but more often at the river's mouth, in order to escape the shifting sands and the shallows which impede the navigation of the Dee. Thus, for example, the Duke of Schomberg with a large army embarked here in 1689, after having lain encamped several days near the shore waiting for a wind; and shortly afterwards King William III. rode down from Chester with his staff, took command of another army which was drawn up on the same ground, and with it passed over to Carrickfergus.

Now it is true that such objects as Roman and early English coins or ornaments cannot well have been lost by Dutch or English soldiers of the seventeenth century. But the routes carved out for traffic are very ancient, and when great expeditions in one age are found selecting a certain point of embarkation, it may safely be inferred that other military leaders, in earlier years, have found the same spot suitable. This, at any rate, is true of Leasowe, and it is not open to doubt that from the earliest times of which we have any record Roman soldiers, Norman knights, English spearmen, monks seeking the higher culture of the Irish monasteries, statesmen with their train of followers, travellers of every kind and of all degrees, came riding along the forest paths towards the sea in a continuous stream of traffic, lasting through the centuries.

Where travellers in such numbers passed by year after year, it is conceivable that many things may have been lost. Even highways in the open

country were difficult enough in old times, and the forest tracks were doubtless such as to cause frequent accidents and confusion among the travellers who frequented them. In sixteen centuries what vast numbers of persons must have trodden the paths beneath those trees which were long since overthrown! How many of their personal possessions may have dropped from them into the rustling leaves which strewed the ground in autumn!

It would naturally be supposed that so great a multitude of travellers were not making for a desolate piece of uninhabited shore such as we now see at Leasowe. If the place was in some degree a port, as has been shown, there must have been cottages for the mariners, and lodgings of some sort to accommodate the travellers, who might often have to wait many days before the wind was suitable for sailing. There must also have been artificers able to repair any damage which arms or accoutrements had suffered during the journey, as well as merchants to provide whatever supplies were needed for the voyage. Here was the material for a considerable village, or a small town, the existence of which may be presumed as certainly as if its walls were visible still; yet one stands on the shore at Leasowe and sees nothing but a dangerous and lonely shore on which no sailors would think of dwelling, and to which no travellers ever come.

The truth is that the sea has here swallowed up a town, and with it so many acres of the flat surrounding land as to alter completely the line of the coast, converting a prosperous little harbour or roadstead into a line of shoals or shifting sands avoided by all mariners. On old maps a town is marked, named Great Meols, far to seaward of the existing forest remains. Some sixty or seventy years ago, when the channel was being surveyed, the dredgers cut right through the burial-ground of the place, and discovered many skeletons laid side by side. Singularly little is known of this submerged township, the very existence of which is so far forgotten that the shreds of evidence here brought together are all that can be found in proof of the assertion that men and women during many ages lived and worked and died on those flats over which the sea now washes. History is silent about their doings. Of their town which now lies buried under the sea nothing is known, save that we may conjecture from the fact of its absolute disappearance that it passed through a period of gradual and slow decay, so that before the sea tore away the last acres of the ground on which it stood, the little place had doubtless lost already whatever consequence it once possessed, and had nothing worth defending against the ravages of the ocean.

Yet it must have been a prosperous community which peopled Great Meols through many ages. Poor people, struggling for existence under hard conditions, do not use such articles as are found so plentifully in the peat. There are brooches of bronze and silver, finely wrought by workmen cunning enough to be called artists, sometimes ornamented with enamels which, after so many years' immersion in the corroding moisture of the peat waters, have not wholly lost their colours yet, or studded with precious stones such as were most easily procured in old times in England.

There are spurs such as knights wore, with studs and buckles such as rich men decked their harness with, finger-rings, crucifixes, and seals, all of workmanship which must have been costly in its day, quite beyond the reach of cottagers or even of any but gentlemen or wealthy merchants. With these are quantities of household implements, keys, locks, bolts, pottery of every kind, combs, beads, swords and daggers. Yet it is strange that among this medley of articles none appear to have been found which are especially associated with ships or sailors. Possibly the little place had a sailors' quarter; and, indeed, the greater portion of the town lies so far below the line of low water that the existing relics are clearly gathered up only from its landward fringe, where doubtless the more wealthy inhabitants lived, while the sailors dwelt nearer to their ships.

With all this mingled fact and speculation, one is still a long way from a satisfactory explanation of the presence of these antiquities upon the Cheshire shore. For if the objects were found washed up on the sand and left there by the retreating tide, the matter would be simple. But they are not so found. Coins, brooches, spurs, all the relics of every kind are found singly in the peat. How they came there is for the present a mystery, at most no more than half-solved, as is also the astounding number of ancient coins recovered from what was, as explained, only a very small part of the ancient settlement. Were there Roman coins to be found in equal numbers when the town was still peopled? By what series of events did they come to be sown in the forests as thickly almost as the acorns fell in autumn, yet never in heaps, or in groups of two and three, but always singly? These are questions which may perhaps be solved in the future, for hardly a year goes by without making plain some matter which our fathers gave up as unintelligible. For the present, however, they are mysteries which cannot fail to pique our curiosity, and maintain a constant interest in the little town which so long ago slipped and slid away beneath the ocean.

NOTHING MORE.

PLACE me beneath the apple-trees
In pleasant summer weather,
Where zephyrs come and wild bees hum
And phloxes bloom together.

Give me my favourite book to read,
My Tennyson or Browning;
A whiff of the far Indian leaf
The summer's fragrance crowning.

My children's voices let me hear,
That on the lawn are playing,
And joining in the merry sport,
The bounding collie baying.

Let me behold the blue above
Fair ships on dreamy seas,
No more I ask of kindly Fate,
But only joys like these.

T. P. JOHNSTON.

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WITH A STEAM-LAUNCH ON THE ORINOCO.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE 'AUGUSTA.'

By Major STANLEY PATERSON.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

I WONDER how many unofficial Englishmen have heard of Ciudad Bolivar, or know where it is? Alas for the durability of human fame! As the city of Simon Bolivar, the great 'Libertador' of South America, it is almost unknown, while by its ancient name of Angostura, the city of appetising bitters, it is advertised in every bar or saloon where the insinuating cocktail is concocted.

But Bolivar has in itself some claim to importance. A well-constructed old Spanish city of 14,000 inhabitants, built round a rocky eminence on the right bank of the Orinoco, about 270 miles from the Boca Grande or great mouth, it is the trading centre for, and natural gathering-place of, the products of the upper Orinoco and its innumerable tributaries, all of which are being gradually but surely opened up to the commerce of the world. Besides, Bolivar as the capital of Spanish Guiana, the province whose boundary is now in dispute, is one of the principal cities of Venezuela; and at the present juncture Venezuela is seriously convinced that the eyes of all Europe are watching her in anxious suspense.

The early days of November found the writer and three friends, the Citizen, the Mikado, and Georgi, stranded in this somewhat dull town, inwardly—ay, and sometimes outwardly—fuming at the official incompetence, procrastination, and obstruction which delayed the execution of certain commercial business which must of necessity be accomplished before a start could be made for the remote western reaches of the river, whither it was proposed to proceed for the purpose of exploring, and exploiting the rubber supply in a part of the vast Amazonas territory, the concession of which had been granted to the Mikado. But Venezuelans are past-masters in the gentle art of obstruction.

Notwithstanding that every official, with outspread hands and grave bows, assured us that he and his were entirely at our disposition, yet no sooner was the smallest service asked than it was politely put aside until 'mañana' (to-morrow) or 'mas tarde' (a little later); and this was repeated with such frequency as to convince us that the ability to gracefully utter these phrases formed the one necessary qualification for Venezuelan officialdom.

But even Venezuelan obstruction can be overcome by patience—and dollars. Consequently, after many weary days, the greater part of the business was satisfactorily concluded, and we decided to move westward, leaving the Mikado behind to complete the minor details. We were not sorry to get away. The Citizen said these people tired him; he guessed they were a bit too rich for his blood, and thought a course of simple Indians was the thing for him.

Our craft was the American-built steam-launch, *Augusta*, thirty-seven feet long and of about six tons register; a smart little boat, but scarcely powerful enough to cope with the heavy stream usually met with in the upper Orinoco. Next day was employed in victualling the boat, and fixing above the forward awning a large reflector-lamp which the Citizen had brought from New York, and of which he was in no small degree proud, and it was not until the sun was well down that all was ready for a start.

Quite a number of people came down to witness our departure, and considerable interest was displayed in the launch that, moored in a quiet backwater, with all her lamps lit and the new reflector throwing a broad beam of light on the yellow water, looked very trim and workman-like.

Suddenly the light brightened to a glare, and before any one quite realised what had happened, the forward wooden awning was wrapped in flame. The reflector-lamp had burst, and the burning oil was rapidly spreading over the boat. One of the Indian crew ran hurriedly forward with a bucketful of water, but was luckily

stopped in time; then some more practical person on shore shouted 'Arena! arena!' (sand).

Immediately numbers of willing hands were filled on the beach, and a rush made for the boat.

And now occurred an incident which, had the occasion been less serious, must have seemed distinctly ludicrous.

The boat was connected with the shore by a single plank, and as all the eager helpers arrived at the end of this almost at one and the same time, a general jostle ensued as to who was to be first up, with the result that most of the sand was spilled, and some of the more energetic aspirants slipped into the shallow water, retiring to the bank with wet clothing and audible grumbles, to resume the less arduous rôle of spectator.

It is doubtful if out of this first endeavour one single handful of sand ever reached its objective; but the failure served to systematise further effort, and in a few minutes the fire was extinguished, with but little damage to the boat beyond considerable scorching of the paint and woodwork and the conversion of our golden American eagle into an extremely sombre and sooty bird.

The occurrence was trifling, but with it began the *Augusta's* bad luck. Soon the conventional 'adios' were over—though, to be sure, a Venezuelan farewell salute would hardly be conventional in England—the moorings loosed, and the *Augusta* was steaming rapidly westward, the lights of Bolivar's city growing dim behind her, while the crew set to with a will to make things ship-shape on board.

A strangely cosmopolitan crew we were, and for confusion of tongues our floating home almost rivalled the Tower of Babel. First there was the Citizen of the Free and Enlightened, &c., an American whose knowledge of Spanish was only a shade better than that of the writer—that is, of the meanest description.

Georgi, a Cuban, only used his few English words supplementarily when his extensive stock of Spanish expletives gave out.

The Venezuelan piloto or padron expressed himself solely in grunts, but was understood to talk his national language. The sailors, two Indians of different tribes, spoke a Spanish scarcely more intelligible than their own heathenish tongue; while the engineer, a Parisian, knowing nothing but French, could only communicate with the writer and partially with Antonio, his Portuguese fireman, the linguist of the party, speaking equally badly Spanish, Portuguese, French, and English, but popularly reported to blaspheme volubly in any known tongue. The difficulty of issuing a direct order to such a crew will be readily realised.

For an hour we ran along the southern bank, then crossed to get slacker water, in which we kept till about midnight, when, just as the boat was again headed southward and was standing out into the main current, there was a crash in the engine-pit followed by the grim grating and clanking sound of uncontrolled metal; then dead silence as the screw stopped.

The engines had broken—we realised it at once, and the Citizen called forward to the padron to let go the anchor. But that leisurely individual

either failed to hear or to comprehend—most certainly to obey—the order immediately. And when finally the anchor was let go it was too late; the boat had been caught by the full current. A small keel and sixty feet of rope would not hold her, and becoming more of a danger than a safeguard, had to be hoisted aboard.

Georgi and Antonio, the latter rudely awakened out of his scarce-begun beauty sleep, were soon at work investigating the broken machinery, and on discovering that one of the eccentrics was smashed into fragments, some of which had fallen through the engine-pit grating into the bilge, declared the damage was beyond their power to repair at night.

Meanwhile the light evening breeze had given way to a strong and rapidly-rising wind, while the stars were one by one effaced by a heavy black cloud that, springing up suddenly in the east, spread quickly over the whole horizon, turning the former clearness of the night into a sensible darkness.

We now began to realise the gravity of our position—at best an unpleasant one. Having no mast, sails, or even spare gear to rig a jury-mast, we were completely at the mercy of the river, and could only trust to the chance of being carried into a backwater where the anchor would hold. Below us were several dangerous reefs of rock round which the water ran like a mill-race, circling and twisting behind them in boiling whirlpools—locally called 'choreras'—in themselves no mean danger. That we could escape all or pass through any without shipwreck seemed impossible; and shipwreck meant almost certain death to all on board. For the Orinoco is no prattling summer stream, but a giant amongst rivers—mighty, irresistible, wonderful beyond description, hiding many an undreamt-of danger beneath its turbid yellow waters. Woe to the unlucky mortal forced to swim in it! Should fate spare him a death by drowning in the under-currents and choreras, he still has to run the gauntlet of the hungry and alert caymans, the tremblador or electric eel, whose paralysing touch once disorganised an army, and the shoals of fiendish little Carib fish that will in a few minutes turn a living anatomy into a bare skeleton.

The knowledge of our imminent peril affected each individual differently. The Indians threw themselves on the deck in drowsy apathy. The piloto sat mechanically turning the now useless wheel. Georgi went placidly to sleep, while Antonio affectionately played with the broken machinery, crooning to himself the while quaint—if highly spiced—little love sonnets in various tongues.

To add to the discomfort of the situation, the gathering rain now fell; real searching, wetting, tropical rain, driving it from the bow, driving it from the stern, splashing through the interstices of the flapping wind-torn awnings, pouring down the thwarts, trickling into the food-lockers and, in combination with the already heavy waves, successfully drenching everybody and everything on the forlorn little craft.

Thus, at the rate of about five miles an hour, we helplessly drifted down stream, narrowly escaping damage from several small rocks and treacherous sandbanks, till, about half-past three

in the morning, the great gray rocks near Soledad loomed up almost under the bow, and the lights of Bolívar shone out clear on the opposite bank. Hope for a space reanimated the crew, and an effort was made to get the boat into the backwater by the town; but it proved abortive, for, caught in the heavy current off Punto Matteo, spun through a succession of dazing choreras, and finally ejected into the heart of the stream, the *Augusta* was again swept off towards the distant sea.

The position of affairs was now more critical than ever, as the worst of the reefs were still ahead, and we were rapidly drifting away from the one possible place of repair.

Soon in the dense darkness we passed close to the Panadero Island, hearing the swish of wild water on its eastern promontory; scathless ran through the rapids of the Upper and Middle Mollian rocks; and then, at last, the well-wished-for day appeared. But before the first gray gleam became visible, the rain ceased and the wind fell to a dead calm. The storm had passed. Daylight showed that the boat was drifting straight on the lower Mollian reef, and that, as we could now see what we were doing, some means must be devised to avert a possible catastrophe. A single spare oar was dug out from some corner, lashed to a bollard over the screw, and the Indians set to work it as a scull. But the night had cowed them, and no work could they do. Georgi still slept, Antonio was busy with his engines, the Frenchman was down with fever, so we others had to tackle the task.

The boat was now drifting rather more slowly, but it took us two hours of incessant toil with aching backs and blistered hands to clear the rocks, get into a backwater, and finally to run the *Augusta's* nose into some mangrove bushes growing near the bank. There we made fast and let go the anchor.

Meanwhile Georgi and Antonio had between them recovered all the broken pieces of the eccentric, tied them together ingeniously with twine and soda-water wire, and were now fixing the metal in its place. It did not look much of a mend, but was the best that could be done on the spot.

Immediately steam was up a fresh start was made, and the boat was kept going slowly close inshore in case of further untoward accidents.

Strange to say, the soda-water wire held out for fully three-quarters of an hour ere it snapped; with it went the already damaged eccentric, its sound neighbour, and one of the valve rods as well.

Now hopelessly broken down, we anchored close to a scrub-covered sandpit, the engineers working lustily to disentangle the broken machinery, while others, with a view to obtaining fresh food for dinner, tried with Winchesters to kill some of the manatee of which the bay was full. But the momentary glimpse of a nose above water, always in the most unexpected quarter, does not offer much chance of a deadly shot, and the manatee escaped without serious damage.

The sound of the shots luckily brought three half-breed Indians down to the bank, to whom the Citizen heaved a rope in true nautical style, enabling them to haul the boat alongside and make her fast.

These half-breeds had their huts some few hundreds of yards along the promontory (which they told us was called Punto Marguanta), and thither we accompanied them, the head-man, who rejoiced in the name of José Gregorio Frontado, courteously offering us food and rest. His hut was a simple shed thatched with palm-leaves, built under the shadow of a large cotton-wood tree, the furniture consisting of two 'clinchorras,' or grass hammocks suspended from beams and protected by the indispensable mosquito netting. Round the tree bole were ranged the household utensils, constructed chiefly of cocoa-nut and turtle shells, and, by contrast, an extremely rusty and dilapidated American sewing-machine, looking strangely out of place in such company. After ceremonious introduction to the señora, Maria Clorinda Rondon (a Spanish wife keeps her maiden name), we sat ourselves down at a rude table under the shadiest branch of the cotton-wood tree and hungrily ate our host's own dinner of stewed beans and cassava followed by most excellent coffee. During the meal the Citizen spent much time in ingratiating himself with a mixed community of pigs, dogs, fowls, and staring nude brown babies by distributing amongst them some of the biscuits we had brought from the boat, thus rapidly collecting a numerous and appreciative audience. Presenting our hosts with cigarettes, one of which the señora eagerly and immediately lit, we walked along the promontory looking for pigeons, of which our host said there were many, to shoot; but though we heard plenty in the tall trees they could not be got at.

Time was passing, the heat was terrible, and the Citizen, who is a man of certain proportions, and was bathed in perspiration, declaring that he was not going to go fooling around one minute longer in such a blamed sun, a return was made to the boat. Here a council of war was held, and it being deemed hopeless to mend the machinery at Marguanta, it was decided that the best course would be to hire a 'curiara' (dug-out canoe) from José Gregorio, remove the broken pieces, and take them up to Bolívar for repair.

Accordingly about one o'clock all the necessary baggage was transported to the Frontados' hut, below which the curiara was moored, and, accompanied by José and a small Indian boy, we set out for the city, Antonio and the Indians being left in charge of the launch. A curiara voyage is somewhat trying to one unaccustomed to such mode of transit, and although there was a good breeze and the dug-out sailed well, we were all very hot and tired when at seven o'clock we ran on the custom-house beach, and hiring boys to carry the baggage, walked back to our old quarters, fairly astonishing the Mikado, who naturally thought we were miles away up the river. Next morning early the machinery was put in the hands of a native blacksmith, an extremely poor workman as we afterwards found to our cost, and Georgi and he laboured at it all day, the engineer of the Bolívar Water Company also kindly and materially assisting.

But the task proved greater than we had thought, and it was not until the second morning that we were able to return to the *Augusta*. Paddled down stream by José and his juvenile assistant, we reached Marguanta just as the night fell, and at once commenced to refit engines, a

work which would, it was expected, occupy about two hours.

Alas! nothing would induce the new eccentric—Antonio insisted on calling it a 'scentic'—to fall into its place; consequently for hours there was incessant rasping and hammering accompanied latterly by muttered imprecations and much mutual recrimination in the engine-pit, whence Georgi eventually emerged—cross, dirty, and perspiring—with the information that Antonio in his attempts at renovation had unwittingly broken the boiler pump and so made matters worse than ever. This was dispiriting, indeed serious news, for food was running very short.

The pilot and one Indian being required to start with a pioneer expedition from Bolivar next day, it was decided to send them off in the curiara; so at 1 A.M. the wretched José was ejected from his comfortable chinchorra, and instructed to get his canoe ready immediately. With this party a note was sent to the Citizen, who had remained in the town, telling of our new quandary and asking for provisions; the piloto, who carried it, being expressly warned not to deliver it too early in the morning, an injunction which he obeyed by rousing the Mikado at half-past four, thereby bringing on himself much wrath and vituperation.

Meanwhile all on board the *Augusta* had lain down for a well-earned rest, but the ubiquitous mosquitoes rendered this impossible, except to Georgi, who slept as though there was not such a thing as a poisoned blood-firing proboscis in the whole world. Not even the Indians or the hardened Antonio could stand them, and day-break, heralded by flocks of screaming parakeets and macaws, came as a relief to all.

Lighting a fire on the bank, we set about the preparation of morning coffee, a beverage without which no true Venezuelan would dream of beginning the day; but we came near to losing part of our little stock, for just as it was ready we were startled by a severe earthquake shock that half-upset the coffee-pot, and sent little waves chasing one another far up the sandy beach. We afterwards discovered that this shock was felt over the greater part of South America.

Coffee finished, work was renewed, and the refractory eccentric safely fixed in its place, but the pump still remained obdurate.

Then arose the question of water supply to the boiler. After deep calculation, we concluded that by filling this by hand before starting, the water might just last long enough to reach Bolivar. Anyhow, it was worth trial, for at least we should get somewhere nearer our ultimate destination. The launch steamed fairly well, though the engines ran far from smoothly, an ominous creak or groan sending our hearts to our mouths every few minutes. Slowly but surely the water in the glass gauge crept down; off the Pandero it was half-exhausted; rounding Punto Matteo it was scarce visible. A quarter of an hour more and the fires must be raked out or an explosion risked. With luck we might just do it, but it was a race against time, and the excitement of contest spread amongst the crew, raising the natural gambling spirit in all. One by one on various pretexts they crept aft and crowded round the glass, watching the diminishing water

with semi-fascinated eyes. At this critical moment we became aware of José in his curiara violently signalling to us to stop, and shouting that he had our provisions. Stoppage now would be fatal. Antonio's hand seized the lever. 'No! no!' shouted the rest of the crew in unison; 'let her go,' and the hand fell off. A turn of the wheel sent us rushing close by the bewildered Indian, whom we told to land the provisions at the nearest hut; then the boat was headed for the Water-work Rocks. Georgi sprang to the whistle-cord, and the *Augusta* gave forth three loud triumphant screams; the rocks were passed. 'Hard a port, ease her, stop her,' and the *Augusta* swung into her old berth in the backwater. Wide flew the furnace doors, and out came the burning cinders, while the steam hissed harshly from the opened valves. We had done it, but with nought to spare; the gauge-glass was dry.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER IX.

To one so devoted to his profession as Alexander Philipof, the harsh treatment accorded to himself and his fellow-officers of the Okhotsk was a very bitter blow; and in spite of his indignant refusal to leave the corps and submit to be pushed up the ladder of promotion by virtue of Dostoief's intimacy with the Tsar, he occasionally found himself wishing that he could reconcile it with his sense of loyalty to his comrades in misfortune to leave them and soar by himself.

The feeling that he was submerged, through no fault of his own, weighed upon the young officer and embittered him against those in authority, and especially the Tsar himself, for having cruelly and unjustly singled out one regiment to be made an example of in deference to the expressed prejudice of the late Emperor Nicholas. Sasha's displeasure with the Tsar was augmented by Dostoief's neglect of his wife. For this he considered the master almost as culpable as the servant; for, he argued, if the Tsar were animated by anything like proper feelings, he would insist upon his aide-de-camp paying at least a minimum of attention to his domestic affairs, instead of claiming the whole of his time and devotion for his own service. As a matter of fact, Sasha, in ignorance of the facts, did his Majesty a great injustice in this matter; for the Tsar had, more than once, rallied his favourite companion upon his failure as a family-man, and it sometimes happened that, on the occasion of one of Dostoief's rare visits to his wife, that visit would never have been paid at all but for the Tsar's urgent personal insistence.

Now that Sasha could only visit Olga at rare intervals, his discontent with affairs in general was the deeper, and he would wander for hours at a time chewing the cud of resentment and displeasure. It was while out strolling upon one of these brooding excursions that Sasha was attracted one afternoon towards a small crowd of people standing about the gates of the 'Summer Gardens,' an uninteresting piece of ground situated on the Grand Quay of the Neva, and rarely made use of even by the perambulating nursemaid, so entirely dull were its boarded, flowerless

walks and interminable rows of tall trees. Sasha joined the crowd out of pure curiosity and the desire to be amused in his depression by the society of his fellows, and soon learned that the young Emperor was expected, this being the hour at which he was in the habit of taking walking-exercise in the Summer Gardens. It was a noisy, good-natured group of people assembled there to gratify their curiosity, and Sasha observed many types. Most noticeable of all, perhaps, were the police, of whom there were four or five present: little kaftaned fellows with impossibly severe countenances, from which two things were obviously and eternally absent—namely, soap and smiles. The business of life and the importance of the position destiny had called upon them to maintain were far too serious to admit of even a moment's relaxation from the tension of solemnity and official dignity; while as for soap—washing, as all nations except the inhabitants of these isles are well aware, is nothing more than a fad; the more you wash the more you desire to wash; it is much better to abstain altogether—so the Russians think—and take your steam-bath once a fortnight or once a month, or once a year, as the case may be; you thus save an immense amount of trouble, and time, and soap. The little policemen strutted about in their long dressing-gown-like garments and long boots, and clanked their swords, and gravely pressed back those of the spectators who pushed themselves forward; and paid no heed whatever to the boisterous mirth of those who listened to the indelicate humour of a self-appointed jester whose remarks upon the passers-by, the ladies especially, were decidedly, if somewhat broadly, droll, and were especially appreciated by the drivers of two or three droschkiys drawn up by the roadside.

These particularly unsavoury persons—shock-headed, shock-bearded, kaftaned, fur-capped though the season was warm, and inexpressibly dirty—stood by their crazy vehicles and stamped their feet in uproarious merriment—for the commoner Russian is nothing if he is not a patron of humour; he loves a joke, especially a broad one, above everything. There were a few of the student tribe present, a lean, hungry-looking, mostly spectacled type; pale and underfed, and never to be seen without the dark-checked shawl which every student wears about his neck and shoulders, that being the sole protection of many of this penurious class of mortals in the coldest Russian weather. The ranks of the dissatisfied and aggrieved—so large an army at all times in the empire of the Tsar—are mostly recruited from the poor half-starved students, whose condition is so deplorable that they are easily persuaded by interested persons to attempt to better it by joining revolutionary societies in the hope of fishing to some advantage in troubled waters. Many of these poor fellows live and educate themselves without any settled income whatever, relying for their food and university fees—which are cheap enough!—upon such small sums as they can gain by giving lessons in private families, with the result that the university towns are full of actually semi-starved young fellows whose presence is a continual danger to the peace of the realm. There were many of these poor creatures present in the crowd; one stood close to Sasha, and Philipof noticed how the unfortunate

man shivered at intervals in spite of the warmth of the weather, and how pale and haggard was his face, and how lean and fragile the shawl-covered chest and shoulders. There were other types present: infantry officers like himself, in seedy uniforms, and one or two guardsmen in smart ones—for in Russia officers wear their uniforms at all times. The cavalry and guards can afford to renew their worn-out finery, for their pay is good and they are generally monied men besides; while the poor linesmen are badly paid and cannot afford to replace their faded habiliments with new excepting upon very rare occasions.

There were beggars present, of course; you cannot go very far in St Petersburg without meeting these; and *chinovniks*—civil-service clerks—dressed in uniforms semi-military. From time to time a smart carriage or droschky would dash past, for the Grand Quay was a fashionable drive at this hour of the day, and the facetious little civilian had a word to say about each, when it had gone by out of hearing, which convulsed his delighted hearers with laughter, but which would have greatly disconcerted the objects of his remarks could they have been aware of the nature of them.

But presently both jokes and laughter were brought to an abrupt termination, for in the distance of the quay a sudden clamour of hoofs upon the cobbles was heard, plumed helmets flashed in the sun, and in a moment or two a procession of three or four droschkiys could be distinguished rapidly approaching—as fast, indeed, as Russian trotters, among the fleetest in the world, could draw them. First came a droschky with a single officer in it, followed closely by another drawn by two horses—one in the shafts trotting, the other cantering alongside; this was the distinctive equipage of the head of police, whose place was at that time invariably in close attendance upon his Majesty. After him followed a third and a fourth droschky, each with one horse, long-tailed, black, and strenuous, and each containing a single aide-de-camp—Dostoief and another.

A great silence fell upon the little group of interested spectators as this small but brilliant procession approached. The diminutive policemen became feverishly busy, and their preternaturally grave faces assumed an air of stern and unbending severity as they crowded back the excited onlookers till each person was forced to stand on some one else's toes or heels for want of ground to plant his feet upon. Sasha could not help bitterly contrasting his own position—jammed between an unsavoury student on the one hand and a no less disagreeable companion on the other, with an odoriferous Muscovite standing on his toes and another jamming his knees into his calves—with that of the brilliant young captain Dostoief, dashing over the cobbles, the admired of all beholders, in all the glory and honour of close attendance upon his imperial master. Why should destiny have treated the one so badly, the other so generously? In what respect was Dostoief superior to himself? Sasha took off his hat to the Emperor as he approached because the rest did, but he performed this simple act of respect without conviction, and with little real sense of loyalty. He had no active feeling of animosity

against the Emperor—that is, he was displeased with him, very irrationally, for being the son of Nicholas, who had insulted him and wronged his regiment, and further, by reason of his conduct in keeping Dostoiief away from his wife, as Philipof imagined to be the case. But he cherished no desire to harm the Tsar, and his hostility towards him, such as it was, was a very mild and entirely passive sentiment—just sufficiently strong, indeed, to cause him to be foolishly backholding in the matter of extending to the Tsar the usual courtesies of loyal subjects—such as uncovering his head when he drove by; but extending no further than this.

As the droschky of Alexander II. dashed up to the gate of the gardens and stopped, Sasha felt a dig in the ribs from his neighbour on the right, and turned to remonstrate. At the same instant he became aware that the man, or rather the youth, for the student was scarcely more than a boy, was drawing some object from beneath his shawl, and that the dig had been accidentally administered while so doing. The next moment the object of the fellow was apparent. He had possessed himself of a pistol and was in the act of levelling it at the sacred person of the Tsar.

Sasha was so surprised by the sudden and unexpected action of the youth that his intelligence barely worked in time to permit of his rising to the emergency. Horror for one moment paralysed his hand as well as his brain, but only for a moment. The student had not raised his pistol above the level of the heads of those who stood about him, but had pointed it between the necks of two persons in front of him; no one saw the movement excepting Sasha himself, and but for the dig in the ribs he too would have been unaware of anything happening. But the critical instant of horrified inaction passed, and the next Sasha had uttered a hoarse exclamation as he grabbed hastily at the fellow's wrist. At the same moment the pistol exploded and fell to the ground at his feet; while the shot, diverted by Sasha's movement, flew harmlessly, high over all heads, towards the Neva.

The commotion was tremendous. The student and Philipof became the centre of attention, for Sasha had promptly addressed himself to the capture of the would-be assassin, while the latter had instantly turned upon his assailant. The police, meanwhile, arrested every one they could lay hands upon, having entirely lost their heads in the first moment of horror and alarm.

And now began for Sasha Philipof a series of weird, horrible, nightmare episodes, which he could scarcely realise, at the beginning, to be happening to himself. So utterly unexpected and topsy-turvy was the whole affair from this moment onwards that he appeared to be dreaming a bad dream.

The first step in this nightmare procession of deplorable errors was that the student-assassin suddenly commenced to shout at the top of his voice as he fought savagely with his would-be captor: 'Seize him,' he yelled, 'help, some one! Seize him, seize the assassin—this way, police—here is the man!'

Half-a-dozen officious hands quickly laid hold of poor astonished Sasha's coat, of his arms, even of his throat, and held him, so that not only could he not retain his grip of the student, but

he soon found himself powerless in the grasp of his many assailants, whom he assured in vain—though without as yet attaching much importance to the matter, since the mistake scarcely appeared sufficiently serious to trouble himself about—that they had got hold of the wrong man. But no one listened to his protestations; and feeling that the error must soon be discovered and the right man arrested, Sasha at last shrugged his shoulders and resigned himself to circumstances.

LIFE IN THE DEPTHS OF THE OCEAN.

By Dr T. L. PHIPSON,

Author of *Familiar Letters on some Mysteries of Nature, &c.*

IF we compare the bottom of the sea, as far as it is known, with the surface of the dry land, we find many important differences which modern investigation has brought very vividly to light. The surface of the land is diversified in many ways by the action of the atmosphere, the rain, the streams and rivers, by alternating periods of moisture and drought, by frost and winds, and, on the coast, by the movement of the sea itself. On the floor of the ocean none of these agents are at work; consequently there is very little diversity of surface. It has been found by innumerable soundings that there exist at the bottom of the sea vast plains and valleys, and, here and there, great mountain chains, the summits of which occasionally rise above the surface of the water. If we take the Bay of Bengal, for instance, which in recent times has been particularly well studied in this respect, we find that the bottom of the ocean in that part of the globe is a vast plain nearly a thousand miles in its greatest breadth, broken only by one long narrow mountain chain, which, at certain places, rises above the sea and forms the Andaman Islands. But everything is on a vast and monotonous scale, devoid of diversity, because there are no 'sculpturing' forces at work, no variation of temperature, no alternating periods of heat and cold, no winds, no movement of the water—for waves, we know, are quite superficial, and even the great ocean currents, such as the Gulf Stream, do not extend to any very considerable depth below the surface. Moreover, there are no seaweeds, nor any sunlight, which is necessary to enable them to grow.

The bottom of the deep sea is, indeed, entirely screened from the warmth and light of the sun by the intervening mass of water. On land we often experience that the intervention of clouds, which are simply steam, or divided masses of water, results in gloom and a fall of temperature. This effect is infinitely more intense at the bottom of the ocean, between which and the sun there is interposed, not only for a day or two, a layer of cloud, but, for ever, a volume of water often several miles thick. Even at fifteen fathoms from the surface the light is much subdued, producing more the appearance of pale moonlight than of sunlight, and experiments made with very sensitive photographic plates in the clear water of the Lake of Geneva have shown that sunlight does not penetrate to a greater depth there than one hundred and fifty-five fathoms. In the open ocean and in the tropics, where sunshine is most intense, no light penetrates beyond

a depth of two hundred fathoms. Below this all is dark.

The sun's heat, like its light, is also cut off from the ocean depths in the same manner. A cousin of the writer found that in the Bay of Bengal there is a fall of temperature amounting to about 1° Fahr. for every ten fathoms from the surface that the thermometer sinks. At two hundred fathoms he has found that the thermometer stands all the year round at 55° Fahr.; and at two thousand fathoms it constantly registers about 35° Fahr., or close upon freezing-point. It is curious to note that as we rise in the air, in balloons or on mountain-slopes, the temperature falls as we rise, and the same occurs as we dive into the depths of the ocean. But in mines the heat increases as we descend.

Ordinary plant life, so abundant on the land, appears to be entirely absent on the floor of the deep seas; for plants can grow only in the presence of sunlight. Hence these vast, dark, silent plains and valleys beneath the waters of the ocean are, as far as we know, absolutely bare of vegetation. It is difficult, indeed, to conceive that life of any kind could be found in the midst of such desolation; and yet the dredgings made during the last twenty years have proved that these cold, dark depths really teem with animal life. At the surface of the sea we are accustomed to the pressure of the superincumbent atmosphere only, which amounts, as every one knows, to about fifteen pounds on every square inch of the surface of our bodies. But water is much heavier than air, since a column of water, thirty-three feet high, exerts the same pressure as the whole column of the atmosphere, which is at least two hundred and fifty thousand feet, or about forty-five miles high; so that a column of water two thousand fathoms deep exerts a pressure of about two and a half tons to the square inch, which is very different from fifteen pounds.

Such are the conditions under which animals must live at the bottom of the ocean. They are subjected to enormous pressure; they are absolutely deprived of sunlight; they live in a medium the temperature of which is only a little above freezing-point; and, as there are no plants for them to eat, they are carnivorous and highly rapacious. Let us take, for instance, a deep-sea fish which naturalists call *Tauredophidium*; we find it closely allied to those peculiar blind fish which inhabit the underground waters of the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. It is quite blind: underneath the skin, where the eyes usually are, we find mere rudiments of those organs. Or let us take again the deep-sea crustaceans, animals of the crab kind, we find that they are also blind; they have eye-stalks, like their close relatives the lobsters, but the eye-stalks, like those of the peculiar crayfish of the Mammoth Cave just mentioned, carry no eyes.

But other inhabitants of these great ocean depths manufacture, so to speak, their own light, by secreting from their tissues a curious phosphorescent substance, known as *noctilucone*, which is produced by certain minute glands, as in the fire-fly and glow-worm. Thus many of these strange beings, both fishes and crustaceans, are highly luminous. And in all these cases the eyes are singularly developed, being much larger than usual, and well-provided with blood-vessels and nerves.

If there are no plants growing at the bottom of the deepest waters of the ocean, how are these submarine animals provided with food and oxygen? We know that on dry land animals depend on plants for the pure air (oxygen) which they breathe; and they, in their turn, give back carbonic acid, which is just as necessary for plants. All animals either live directly on vegetable food, or are dependent on it indirectly, as in the case of carnivora which feed on herbivora. This apparent anomaly has attracted considerable attention, and an attempt has been made to elucidate it in the following manner. The surface of the sea, besides its host of seaweeds and larger animals, is crowded with minute organisms, and there is an incessant rain, so to speak, of such small food, both vegetable and animal, from the surface to the depths below. The rivers also convey to the sea a large amount of vegetable food which finds its way to the bottom of the ocean. It is on food derived from these sources that the lower forms of life are supposed to feed; and the larger and higher forms feed on these lower forms. Some species of deep-sea fish are very rapacious; they have immense teeth; and their mouths, like those of the *Thaumastomias* and *Penerodon*, for instance, are capable of opening wider even than the mouth of a serpent. These deep-sea animals are generally of sombre and uniform colours, in harmony with the gloom of their habitation; deep black is a common tint, and dark purple shading off to red and pink.

We have noticed here only some of the larger organisms recently discovered; but the microscope has long since revealed a host of curious beings called *Foraminifera*, that live in the water of the ocean and sink into the ooze at the bottom of the sea. The accumulation of these myriads of shells helps to form new strata of sedimentary rock, such as limestone or chalk. And these strata, our geologists believe, will be gradually uplifted till they reach the surface, and will form the dry land of the future.

DR MARTIN'S FURLOUGH.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER so uncomfortable an experience I half-expected a sleepless night. Such an affliction, however, rarely falls on me; I slept profoundly, and woke to find a flood of sunlight pouring into my room, and to hear Champneys calling cheerfully to his dogs beneath my window.

My sound sleep had in no degree lessened the impression left on my mind by the incident in the billiard-room. I made up my mind, however, not to mention the matter to Champneys—at least at present; and so went downstairs.

I found my hostess alone in the breakfast-room, cordial and gracious as she always was. Presently Champneys came in, bluff and cheery, in the highest spirits. Miss Merriman, on the other hand, was very silent when she appeared, and I fancied I detected a change of manner towards myself. I watched her secretly as I ate my breakfast; and once when her eyes met mine I read in them a sort of mute appeal which I could not understand.

Champneys had business in Exeter that day, and Hunter volunteered to accompany him, so that I was left to amuse the ladies. It was a glorious morning, warm and bright, and an hour after breakfast my hostess found me chewing the stump of my cigar on a seat in the veranda.

'How idle you look,' she said. 'Come with me; I will show you my garden.'

I could not well refuse, though I was very happy where I was. We went all round the garden; and at last sat down in the eye of the sun.

'Tell me how Major Hunter impresses you,' she said.

'What an odd question,' I retorted. 'Why should a man whom I met last night for the first time impress me at all?'

'That's no answer; and it is disconcerting to have one question met by another.'

'Yet answer me one more while I am considering yours,' I said. 'Where have I met Hunter before?'

Mrs Champneys sat clasping and unclasping her hands, her constant habit when she is perplexed. 'It is very strange that you should have this idea of having known him before,' she said, 'for I used to have it too; and when I heard your question last night at dinner the feeling came back as strongly as ever.'

'That's odd,' I answered carelessly; 'we are neither of us fanciful people. Does your idea locate itself at all? In India, should you say?'

'Yes; and that's the oddest part of it; for he hates India, as you heard.' She sat silent for a moment, then added, 'You will think it very foolish, I dare say; but I always think of polo when I try to trace my memory out.'

'Of polo,' I repeated; and then, as a long-forgotten scene flashed back on my mind, I started up.

'You have the key,' I cried, 'he is the man who was hurt at polo the very day we reached —. Don't you remember now?'

'But I never saw that man. He was sent home as soon as possible.'

'But I saw him; for I was the only doctor on the ground at the moment, though his own surgeon came up a few minutes later. His skull was fractured. I never thought he would recover.'

'Doesn't that—wouldn't—don't you think that injury might account for a certain' — She broke off her sentence and sat looking at me timidly.

'My dear friend,' I said, 'you must not ask me such a very awkward question.'

'Yet it is a most momentous one to me and mine, and you are a very old friend.'

We sat looking at each other for a moment. I shook my head, resolved to tell her nothing more, though my recollection of the circumstances grew clearer every instant; and at this juncture, to my relief, we heard Miss Merriman's voice at no great distance.

'Where have you hidden yourselves?' she cried. 'Come and help me to gather chestnuts.'

'Really Duance is almost silly about her passion for chestnuts,' said Mrs Champneys peevishly; 'she will eat them by the hour.'

'But I love chestnuts too,' I said; 'let us go and help her.'

'You used to have more power of giving your attention to a serious subject,' she said, while her foot tapped quickly on the gravel.

'Forgive me,' I replied, as I turned away; 'we were trenching on a dangerous subject.'

I found Miss Merriman on her knees in the outskirts of a little wood, separating the fallen chestnuts from the mass of withered leaves and sweeping them into heaps.

'Oh, here you are,' she said. 'I thought you were not coming.'

'You should have had more faith in the attractions of the chestnuts,' I replied gravely, as I began to help her. She made no answer, but went on demurely sorting out her heaps. For my part I could do little but watch her. There was such a grace of youth in all her movements, such a simple pleasure in her task, that I thought with a kind of desperation of the evil face I had seen last night; and then and there resolved that her destiny should never become linked with his if any action of mine could prevent it.

Presently she broke off work, and sat up, looking at her chestnuts with a merry laugh.

'We'll roast them this evening in the dining-room after dinner,' she said, looking more like a happy child than ever; and I was about to make some jesting answer, when, looking up by chance, I saw Hunter's face, contorted as it had been in the billiard-room, peering at us through the bushes.

'Here's Hunter!' I cried, rising to my feet, and taking care as I did so to place myself between him and her, so that she might not see the scowl that had so startled me. Miss Merriman flushed deeply, but did not rise.

'What brings you back so soon?' she asked. 'Has John come with you?'

'My business was short,' he answered. 'Champneys cannot be home much before dinner. I had nothing to do, and so caught the first train back. I am sorry if I interrupt.'

'That remark is not in the best taste,' Miss Merriman observed dryly; 'you do not interrupt. On the contrary, you come at the moment when I was wondering how two people could carry all these chestnuts back to the house. You are in time to help us.'

'Would it not be simpler if Dr Martin would be kind enough to ask some one to bring out a large basket?' asked Hunter, who had seated himself on the trunk of a fallen tree. Miss Merriman bit her lip.

'That means that you think the whole affair a bore,' she remarked. 'Very well, then we will leave them here; and one of the servants shall bring them in.'

'As you like,' Hunter answered carelessly. He held out his hand to help her to rise; but she declined, and we set off together to the house. I disliked Hunter's tone on this occasion too much to care to talk to him, and so allowed myself to fall behind. I caught them up again at a turn of the garden-walk near the house, and overheard Hunter saying in a low tone, 'You know I will go gathering chestnuts, or doing anything else in the world with you, whenever you are alone, Duance,' but Miss Merriman shook her head, and, without replying, went into the house.

That afternoon Hunter and Miss Merriman went out riding together; my hostess was not to

be found ; and I, growing tired at last of amusing myself, arranged to take the dogcart which was going to meet Champneys, and drove off to the station.

'Why, Martin, it's like a bit of old times to see your cheery face behind a gee-gee again,' said Champneys as he came out of the station ; 'how good of you to come !'

'I thought it a good opportunity,' I said, 'seeing that the companion you secured had deserted you.'

'He went off very oddly. I had agreed to lunch with him, had ordered lunch for both of us at the "Clarence," and waited there half-an-hour beyond the time we had fixed to meet ; when I had almost done my lunch a scrappy little note was brought in by a boy, whom I suppose he had caught in the street, saying he thought it better to go home at once. I suppose he was not ill ?'

'He made no complaint,' I answered shortly, and Champneys growled. He did not speak for a few minutes, and I, thinking I might as well say what was in my mind, observed, 'Something odd about Hunter, I think, old man. Do you remember him at — ?'

'At — ? No ; he was never there.'

'Did he tell you so ?'

'I suppose he did ; anyway it is the fact.'

'Don't be so positive,' I said. 'It is not the fact. Your wife and I both remember that he was there, and in circumstances which partly explain his singular dislike of India, besides giving some point to his outburst last night at dinner. For I am mistaken if he did not leave out there a very material part of himself—no less indeed than his mental health, or a good bit of it.'

Thereupon I told Champneys all that I remembered about the accident at polo, adding certain circumstances which I had not thought fit to tell to Mrs Champneys, and concluding by saying that in all my experience I had never known a man recover completely from such an accident, and that it would be found in all probability that Hunter had for some time afterwards been under restraint.

'What am I to say to all this ?' Champneys asked when I had done. 'The man is my friend. He may be odd ; but he is clearly sane enough for a friend.'

'Yes ; but is he sane enough for a brother ?'

Champneys flushed, but let the conversation drop. Hunter was boisterously gay that evening ; and when music was suggested he sat down to the piano and sang a collection of strange, wild songs, ending with that weird old ballad, 'The Wife of Usher's Well,' which as he sang it to a singular melody which he declared to be very old, affected us all with a strange, uncanny thrill, so much so that when he came to the words, 'It fell about the Martinmas, when nights were lang an' mirk,' Miss Merriman sprang up and caught him by the arm.

'Don't sing like that,' she said ; 'you make me think of things that frighten me !'

Hunter broke off at once with a pettish exclamation. 'You should not have interrupted me there,' he said ; 'it was the fine point.'

Mrs Champneys came to the rescue.

'You have frightened us all,' she said. 'I don't think we will have any more music to-night ; let us have a rubber. We shall be a larger party to-

morrow, and shall be able to have dancing in the evening.'

There is nothing special to record about the days which followed. They passed by pleasantly enough.

But, quietly as things went on, the seeds of disturbance were there, and they sprouted and bore fruit in a single afternoon. It was about ten days after the events which have been described, the Champneys were giving a large dance. The house was in confusion all day long ; and late in the afternoon I strolled out by myself and went down into the garden to enjoy a quiet cigar.

I had engaged myself in a path converging on an open space in which a sundial stood before I perceived that there were other people in the garden. I would have turned back, for I wanted to be alone, but I had gone too far, and a few steps brought me out upon Hunter and Miss Merriman standing by the dial. They had evidently just broken off a close conversation, and I was passing with a slight salutation when a cry of suppressed terror burst from Miss Merriman. It was no wonder ; for on Hunter's face there flamed the terrible look which had twice before shaken even my nerves, and which, I venture to say, few people could have witnessed without a painful thrill.

I stopped. There was clear danger in Hunter's countenance, and for perhaps a minute we looked steadily into each other's eyes. Then without a word he turned on his heel and strode away. Miss Merriman stood clinging to the sundial, staring with an ashen face in the direction he had taken. I waited, not knowing what to say. Presently she made an effort for self-control. 'Dr Martin, will you walk with me to the house ?' she said. 'I—I am afraid to go alone.'

I gave her my arm without a word. We met no one on the way to the house. On leaving the garden, as we crossed a wide piece of avenue, where it was plain that no one was in hearing, I said in a low voice, 'I have seen before what you saw just now. Let me beg you to be careful.' She nodded, and disengaging her arm from mine, went into the house.

MASUT, THE NEW SUBSTITUTE FOR COAL.

For many years in the distillation of raw petroleum there has been a by-product called masut, for which no use could be found. It could not be turned into lubricating oil or vaseline, or any marketable commodity. But it burns with a steady, clean flame, and gives out a very great heat. In consequence of this it has been used extensively in Russia for firing steam-boilers. It has been used on the railways and in steamships, and in manufactories. But the great difficulty lay in inventing a suitable furnace to burn it in. It is a dark brown, oily liquid, and of course the furnaces used for coal are of no use. But at last this difficulty has been overcome. By employing steam to blow it into the furnace, on the principle of the Lucigen light, it can now be used without difficulty.

The Russian navy and the Italian navy have used it for some years with success. During the years 1895 and 1896 the German navy has carried

on a series of experiments for testing the value of the new fuel, and the results of these experiments are now published.

Germany has no great oil-wells like Russia and America, but she has coal-fields. A cheap kind of brown coal found in Saxony has been used for the manufacture of masut, and a new and flourishing industry has in consequence been started in that province. It was with this brown-coal masut that the experiments were made which have been so successful. Masut is said to have many advantages over coal.

The first advantage claimed is that it is much cheaper than good coal—as much as forty to fifty per cent. cheaper. It is difficult to see how it can be produced so very cheaply, unless it be that the materials from which it is made being practically worthless, it can be sold at the cost of production.

The second advantage claimed is that it is a better heat-raiser. The result of a comparison of masut with the best steam-coal showed a result in favour of masut as a heat-raiser in the proportion of seventeen to ten. That is more than half as good again, and even supposing the same good results could not always be obtained in ordinary cases, we may be safe in saying that masut is at least twenty per cent. better as a heat-raiser than coal.

The third advantage claimed is that it burns with a steady, brisk flame, and requires scarcely any stoking. In fact the lighting of our engine fires may probably become as simple as the lighting of the gas, and likely also to require as little attention.

The next point in favour of masut is, that it is much better adapted for raising heat in the newer types of steam-boilers than coal is. Steam can be got up quicker by it than by coal, and in consequence of its greater heating power, a higher pressure of steam can be kept up, and a greater amount of work got out of the machinery.

The experiments in the German navy were made during the first year in a torpedo-boat, and afterwards in cruisers and battle-ships, and this is a point of great importance from a naval point of view. To be able to get up steam quickly and keep up a high pressure are points of vital importance in the navy in time of war.

Another point claimed for masut which weighs heavily in the minds of naval officers is that it gives out no smoke. The torpedo-boat, and even the battle-ship, can get up full steam on the shortest notice, and no sign of it can be seen in the sky. In warfare this is of immense importance. At present our swift steamers leave behind them a long trail of smoke across the sky, and the enemy even below the horizon can be detected by this black canopy of soot. Henceforth it will be different. A whole fleet might come within striking distance of our shores and remain unnoticed. We have introduced smokeless powder; it may be necessary, if other nations adopt it, that we also adopt smokeless fuel.

The other year there was a request made to the Admiralty that the Channel Fleet while in Scotch waters should burn Scotch coal. The request was not granted on the plea that Scotch coal caused such volumes of black smut to issue from the funnels that it was impossible to use it and to keep our war-ships as spick and span as they

always are. In time to come the Admiralty may pass by Welsh smokeless steam-coal and try masut.

Masut also is easily stored. At the naval ports of Kiel, Wilhelmshaven, and Danzig there are already tanks from which this fuel can be pumped into the ships without trouble. It will no doubt be possible to convey it in pipes, as oil is already conveyed in America, and water with ourselves. It will be as easy to fill a ship's bunkers with masut as it is to fill her fresh-water tank by a pipe from the shore.

The storage tanks in the case of war-ships can be placed near the ship's bottom, and are perfectly safe from shot and shell. The specific gravity of masut being so very much less than coal, when a ship's bunkers are filled with it instead of coal, her buoyancy is greatly increased. In the case of war-ships a heavier armour can be carried, and merchant-ships can carry a heavier cargo. Not only so, but the heating power of the one being greater, bulk for bulk, than the other, the ship can travel faster with the same consumption, or as fast with a less consumption, and so the fuel will last longer and the ship travel farther.

The new fuel will no doubt have its drawbacks. Something similar has been tried in firing the boilers of our oilworks at home. It has also been used on steamers here; but neither in the one case nor in the other with very great results.

What the improvements are that the Germans have introduced in their furnaces is not quite clear. The report says nothing of the disadvantages of masut. We are not told whether masut is dangerous in the way of explosions or otherwise; whether its smell is pleasant or the reverse. The report dwells on its points of superiority over coal. These are so many and considerable that we in our coal-producing country cannot afford to regard it with indifference. The general introduction of masut into the countries of the Continent would hurt our export trade in coal. Forty to fifty per cent. is a wide margin in these days of small profits, and might mean an import trade in masut instead of an export trade in coal. We shall await with interest the further development of this new heat-raiser. Foreign nations envy our industrial progress, and would be glad to surpass us; but hitherto we have held our own with the best of them, and so will we yet.

AT MAT ARIS LIGHT.

By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY,
Author of *Steve Brown's Bungip*; *In the Great Deep*, &c.

My friend Harding was head-keeper of one of the finest lighthouses in the world, and I was free of it at all hours. But it was o' nights that I loved best to join the old man on his watch, and sit on the balcony and gaze out at the great ocean illumined at minute intervals by the flood of white radiance that seemed to pour forth a greeting to the silent ships as they passed and repassed, or came straight for the harbour-mouth.

Harding was a square-built, gray-haired man with a strong, determined face, all browned and wrinkled by sun and storm, and eyes that burned like live coals under shaggy white brows.

At odd times, athwart the concentrated beams that seemed to hit the far horizon, would sail ships, glorified momentarily as they passed through, with every spar and sail and rope sharply outlined by the sudden brilliance; but more often they slid along between light and water, ill-defined phantasmal blobs of smudge, out of which, when the fancy took them to make their numbers, would spout forth many-coloured fires, all incomprehensible to the untutored eye as the dim fabrics they proceeded from.

But Harding and his assistant signalmen read off ships and numbers as easily, apparently, as if it was broad daylight; and the telegraph would repeat at intervals: 'Large square-rigged ship with painted ports, steering E. by N. Made her number 23,745.' Or, it might be, 'Steamer, black funnel with white band, brig-rigged, deep, bound south, showed no number.' But nothing large or small ever escaped the eagle lookout kept from that eyrie on the great cliff, where the only sounds that broke the long night silences were the wash of the waves on the rugged kelp-grown rocks four hundred sheer feet beneath and the subdued hum of the big dynamo in the basement.

This, you will see, was no isolated light stuck forlornly hundreds of miles from any where. It was an establishment over which Harding presided—quite a little settlement of government offices connected with the important department of harbours, rivers, and trade. His salary was high; so was the efficiency of the service he headed. And he was not averse to a little judicious praise now and again. On one of these occasions I had said something respecting the speedy identification of a foreign cruiser, and the prompt wiring of details to the capital whilst yet the war-ship crept quietly in as if desirous of escaping attention, and little guessing that, long ere she reached the port, a score of nine-inch guns, to say nothing of submarine mines and Brennan torpedoes, would have blown her to atoms had she disregarded the challenge of the warned guardship at Inner Point. Well, I had complimented him on the ceaseless vigilance maintained, and he chuckled, well pleased, and hemmed, and remarked, 'Now that reminds me!'

Usually a taciturn man, and one engrossed in his business, he was difficult to 'draw.' Often enough he had said as much before with no result; often matters had followed well worth the hearing. In any case I knew silence was best.

It was a wild night, with a 'southerly' blowing great guns, keeping the sea flattened into a vast milky-white expanse of foam, that kept up a long-drawn, continuous roar at the foot of the cliffs in fitting accompaniment to the shrieking blasts that wrestled and tore around the great tower, as if striving to shake it from its foundations deep down in the solid rock.

'Come along to my room,' said Harding at last, after a good look around, 'and we'll have a pipe and a glass of grog whilst I tell you about another lighthouse I ran, and another man of war that I watched some twenty-five years ago now.'

Descending into his private snuggerly beside a bright fire, I took one of the big arm-chairs whilst Harding operated with hot water, case-

bottle, lemons, and sugar, and, after fixing matters to his satisfaction, filled his pipe and said:

'Ay, it must be about five-and-twenty years now since the day I sat on the steps of the Sailors' Home in Singapore stone-broke. I'd been first-mate of a ship called the *Star of Africa* that the skipper'd managed to run slap on to a rock in the Straits of Sunda. It wasn't my fault, nor did I lose my ticket like the captain. All the same, I found it precious hard to get another ship.'

'Owners as well as masters have fads and prejudices in this respect—not perhaps as regards a first time. But this happened to be my second wreck running. So my luck, you see, was dead out. Actually but for bananas I might have starved. Bananas and water fill up and satisfy right enough, only it takes you all your time to keep the supply going. Presently, as I sat there, digesting my second or third breakfast, out came the Master-intendant, and said he: "Harding, if you stay here till the moon turns blue you'll never get a ship. But a billet's turned up that, perhaps, is better than nothing. The Dutch," he went on, "have built a lighthouse somewhere down yonder on the Bornean coast, and a second keeper is wanted, wages eighty guilders a month and rations. It's the merest fluke that I happened to hear of it. Will you take it?"'

"Would a duck swim?"

"All right, then, come along to Van Veldt & Co.'s office; they'll take you on my recommendation." The Dutch agents did so without question. More, they paid me a month's wages in advance, and sent me in one of their steamers round to Batavia, where I was to get fresh orders. Arrived there, I was kept waiting a month. But as I had good quarters and plenty to eat and drink, I didn't mind a bit spending my "dead horse" in this way. One day, however, I was told to get my belongings on board a little fore-and-aft schooner which had been loading stores for the newly-built lighthouse.

'We were ten days on the passage; and when we brought up at our destination, and I saw what I'd come to, I'd have taken ten days on bananas and water to get away again.'

'From a thickly-wooded point a reef ran nearly three-quarters of a mile out into the Macassar Straits. At the extreme end of Mat Aris—as the point was called—stood the lighthouse. You'd ha' laughed! Imagine a sort of shed, shaped like one of those oval-topped meat-safes, built on a platform resting on piles forty feet high. That was all. From the shed there ran a corduroy bridge with a handrail, some thirty feet back shoreward, to another and a larger platform where, in a large hut, we were to live. The only way to get down to *terra firma* was by ladders. At low water all you could see was mud, and dozens of alligators that used to come down a river close to for salt-water bathing. Everywhere, almost down to the sea, stood great trees one hundred and fifty feet high, growing close together, elbowing each other so to speak; and, as if that wasn't enough, creepers, ferns, and undergrowth of all descriptions filled up every vacant chink between them. On this impenetrable face of woodland the efforts of the workmen and builders had merely left a slight scratch—even by this rapidly greening over.

Nature heals her scars in that country almost as soon as received. The light itself was merely a big lantern carrying eight wicks, kerosene fed, and hung to the roof of the meat-safe. That it had been badly wanted, primitive as it was, the remains of several vessels emphatically witnessed.

'My boss was there already, a cross-bred, surly-looking customer—father Dutch, mother Malay. She kept house for us—a skinny old hag, with a nose like an eagle's, and a bigger moustache than I could boast of in those days. Her son's name was Peter—Peter Klopp.

'Presently the schooner went away and left us. And what a life it was! Nothing to do after trimming the lights of a morning and sweeping bucketsful of moths out of the round-house, except sit and smoke and look out across the Straits to Celebes—just a blue line of high mountains in the distance—sleep, eat, watch the ships coming and going, or pull faces at the monkeys up amongst the tall trees that waved their heads seventy feet above ours.

'At times the traffic was pretty thick; it was always peculiar. Junks from Swatow, bound for Amboyana and Ceram for sandalwood, swallows' nests, and *bêche de mer*; "country wallahs" from Penang and Singapore, going round to Banjer-massin for coffee and rice; steam tramps from Australian ports loaded up to their gunwales with coal for Manila; and smart little topsail schooners flying any flag that took their fancy, and ready to pick up anything that wasn't too hot or too heavy for them, from a bushel of nutmegs to a holdful of "blackbirds." But, with the exception of a Dutch gunboat, the *Bliksem*, acting as a sort of sea-patrol, which called on us at long intervals, we had no visitors at Mat Aris Point.

'Peter and his old mother I soon discovered were confirmed opium-smokers, and when they went in for a regular spree, and began to suffer a recovery, they made things hum in "Monkey Island," as I called it. Once I was fool enough to interfere and stop Peter from choking the life out of her. For thanks, the pair turned on me; but I managed to dress them down, although Peter nearly got his knife into me. And I can tell you, laughed Harding, pausing in his story, and rising to conjure again with the kettle and other adjuncts, 'that two to one, with precious little room, and a break-neck fall if you're not careful, isn't as funny as it might be.'

Having replenished the glasses and refilled and lit his pipe, Harding proceeded:

'Well, after this I could see that the two had taken a down upon me; and as I, on my part, was heartily sick of the whole contract, I told the officer who commanded the *Bliksem*, next time she called, that I wanted to leave; and that the sooner he found a substitute the better I should be pleased. For answer he called me an English *schelm*, which means rascal, and told me that I had agreed for two years, which was a lie, and that there I should stay. Also, that he'd make it his business to see that I didn't get away.

'Seeing that escape, for that's what it really came to, by water was not to be thought of, except by swimming, and the sharks pretty well put that out of the question, I determined to see what the land side was like. A muddy-banked river

emptied itself just below the lighthouse, and this one day I started to follow up. But I didn't follow long. I don't believe I got a mile before I was mother-naked, and nearly bitten and stung to death. Every bush and shrub, nay, the very flowers seemed to carry a thorn. And what with fire-ants, mosquitoes, leeches, centipedes, stinging flies, and, worse than all, a blamed caterpillar that drops on to you off the leaves and sticks hairs into you that break off in your flesh and fester, I can assure you it was the roughest picnic I ever had. Why, I almost thought I could hear the alligators chuckling as I made home again. Certainly Peter laughed for the first time since we'd been mates on Monkey Island when he saw the plight I was in.

'A day or so after this the gunboat sent her gig ashore again, and, from the hammock I had slung in my portion of the big hut, I could hear much laughter amongst the Dutchmen as Peter detailed my adventure. I heard also allusions to some other *verdronde Englander*; and a long talk about the light and bearings, the gist of which, for want of a more intimate knowledge of the language, escaped me. Next morning I saw Peter marching off along the narrow strip of bank that separated bush from sea with a tail-block over his shoulder, and though wondering mightily what he could be up to, I wasn't going to show any curiosity. A tail-block, by the way, I ought to tell you, is the common block that you reeve a rope through, only to one end of it is attached a long "tail" of plaited stuff, usually by which it can be made fast to a spar or bolt, a-low or aloft. Very little gave me food for thought in those days, and I puzzled over this till Peter came back, and, rummaging amongst the stores, walked off once more with a coil of new ratline-line, and in the same direction.

'He did not appear at dinner, and as I finished my mess of rice, salt fish, and pickled mangoes, I said to the woman, "What's become of Peter?" "He's gone to set a trap for an orang-outang whose tracks he saw at the foot of the ladders yesterday," she replied, grinning and leering. "And," added she sarcastically, "if you don't believe me, go and look, only leave your clothes behind, most misbegotten of English fools."

'Peter came home that evening, and in the interest created by a new visitor in those waters, and whose acquaintance I at once sought some means of making, the incident of the tail-block was completely forgotten.

'Dutch soundings, it appeared, having been found so unreliable as to bring a good few British vessels to grief, that government, characteristically enough, had despatched a vessel to correct them without giving the Dutch notice, or saying by your leave, or anything else.

'And although we, or rather I, was unaware of it, H.M.S. *Badger* had for some time been thus engaged at the upper portion of the Straits. Now she appeared off Mat Aris busy, in sporting parlance, wiping the *Bliksem's* eye, very much to the disgust of the latter's officers, whose specialty, if they possessed one, was supposed to be surveying.

'The *Badger* was a paddle-wheeled, brig-rigged old tub, sure enough. But she was British; and as I stared and stared through the glasses at the white ensign and the good red cross flying from

her peak, I was often tempted to swim off to her as she puffed and churned away, fussing around after her boats like an old hen after her chicks.

'But when I looked at the black three-sided fins sticking up at high-water right alongside our piles, I felt my toes tingle, and thought better of it, trusting that some day she'd send a boat to give us a call, when I determined that go I would if all the Dutch in the East Indies were to try and stop me.

'That Peter guessed my thoughts and notions I could see from the mean, yellow-brown, grinning face of him. And I'd try to get his dander up sometimes. "Look at that, Peter," I'd say. "That's *my* country flag. There's no slaves underneath its folds, sweating and toiling, half-starved and taxed to death's doors like there is under yours. Hip! hip! hooray! Rule Britannia and God save the Queen! and confusion to all half-breeds." He didn't understand all of it, of course, but he used to shake his fist at the *Badger*, and look as nasty as a hatful of snakes.

'Twice whilst I was on watch—as we used to call the intermittent, sleepy lookout we kept at Mat Aris—the *Bliksem* boat came ashore, and I could hear the officer and Peter each time having a long confab together. During the night the old wife always used to have coffee ground and hot water on the fire, so that we could make our own if we wished for a drink.

'One night, shortly after the Dutch officer's last visit, coming in and rousing Peter to take his watch, I brewed myself a cup before turning in. It tasted very bitter, and I didn't finish it, but almost before I'd time to undress I was dead to the world. I woke in a fright, dripping with sweat, and shaking all over. Now, in the light-house was a bottle of lime-juice I'd brewed myself; my throat was as dry as the lubricators of a collier's engines, and the thought of that drink tantalised me till I made shift to crawl out of my hammock and stagger along the bridge to the little house, where also was a "chatty" of cold water.

'To my utter astonishment, on looking up, I saw that the light was out. Opening the door, I entered, and, half-choking, felt for the water-bottle. It was empty. Striking a match, I saw that the floor was soaking wet. Putting up my hand to the wicks, they only frizzed and spluttered at contact with the flame. Also the spare lantern that we always kept ready trimmed had disappeared.

Stepping outside on to the platform, I stared around, headachy and very shaky still. The night was black as pitch—one of those nights you often get out there, that feel almost like black velvet, and as thick. And there wasn't a star to be seen, as sometimes happens at the change of the monsoons. The jungle, too, was still as death—there was no sound on land or on the sea. The whole world seemed fast bound in sleep and darkness. Presently my eye, roving along shore, came to the gleam of a light some half-mile away, about on a level with where ours should have been, only much farther inland—a big light I saw it was, as my eyes got the sleep out of them, and burning steadily.

'As I stared, puzzled beyond expression, I all at once heard the sound of muffled snorting and

churning faint in the distance—a noise as if a shoal of grampuses were coming down the Straits.

'Listening and staring, there suddenly rose to mind fragments of the first talk I'd heard between Peter and the Dutchman about lights and bearings. Then, somehow, came a connection between that and the tail-block and the coil of ratline stuff. Then, I don't know how it happened, but in a second—perhaps you've experienced something of the kind—my brain seemed cleared of cobwebs, as if a broom inside had been swept across it sharply, and the whole plan lay before me plain as mud in a wine-glass. And I laughed; yes, sir, I assure you, I did, for I saw my time had come at last. The puff, puff, and wheezy panting was sounding nearer; and, looking steadily and hard into the distance, I could see a long way up the Straits a shower of sparks like a swarm of fireflies, but which I knew marked the whereabouts of the *Badger*, burning Nagasaki coal.

'She was approaching obliquely, over from the Celebes side, heading about west-sou'-west to pick up Mat Aris light; then, according to the sailing directions, she would straighten up west-by-sou', keeping the light four points on her starboard bow to clear the reef. Now, with the light in its present position, she would, if unsuspicious—and it was the merest chance that anybody on board observed the change—crash right on to the outermost edge of the reef, and go down in deep water, as others had done before her. It was a trap conceived with perfectly diabolical cunning and ingenuity, the site of the false light having evidently been determined most carefully and scientifically, not too far to excite the lookout's distrust, and yet near enough to half-a-point to prove effectual. Puff-puff, churn-churn, pant-pant. Another twenty minutes, and it would be all up with H.M.S. *Badger*. But, knowing exactly what to do—holding two honours and the ace, so to speak—I was as cool as a cucumber, and, except for that trembling about the legs, my own man again. That I had been drugged or poisoned by an insufficient dose I more than suspected. Just then, however, I didn't bother my head about that. I wanted to renew the light on Mat Aris. Round the caboose in which the lantern used to hang, as I've told you, for all the world like a leg of mutton in a meat-safe, ran lockers filled with tins of kerosene, waste, rope, oakum, and such matters. Knocking the heads of a couple of the tins in, I poured the oil over all liberally, saturating everything. After this, a match was all that was needed, and before I was half-way along the bridge the flames were six feet high. Just looking in her den to see that the old lady wasn't there, I went down the ladders like a lamp-lighter, and ran along the bank towards where I knew the false beacon must be, swung high aloft in some tree.

'Over logs and stumps I stumbled, looking back now and again at the big, tall glare till, rounding a point, the dense forest shut it from sight. Getting along somehow, I stopped at last and listened. But I could hear nothing of the *Badger*. Inland, however, high overhead, hung the light. Pulling out my sheath-knife, I made for it, headlong through bush and briar. As I guessed, it was hung to a tree; and, feeling all round, I soon found the rope belayed to a root, and before

you could say "Jack Robinson" I'd slashed it through, and was watching the lantern coming down by the run when a fellow jumped out of the dark, and muzzled me round the throat. "Hello, Peter," I said, as I returned the compliment, "you see the coffee wasn't strong enough." I hadn't time to say much, being very busy, for the brute, in spite of the opium, was stronger than I thought, and I weaker. Down we went, rolling over and over, whilst, to make things warmer, the lantern capsized, and setting fire to the coarse grass, it blazed up all about us. Also the woman, with a big club in her fist, was dancing around screeching blue murder, but frightened to hit, so closely entangled were we. I still grasped my knife. I could see Peter's also gleam as we turned and writhed. Presently I felt a sharp pain in my shoulder, and knew I was stabbed. That made me real mad; and as we rolled away a bit from the fire, the hag made a smack at me, but missing, caught Peter on the point of the shoulder, causing him to drop the knife. He stretched out to recover it, and I got home on him till I felt the wooden haft jar against his ribs.

'He went limp all in a minute, exactly like one of those bladders the children play with if you shove a pin into it. Well, we'd rolled down a bank into a bit of a swamp, and when the hag saw what had happened she gave one yell, and jumped fairly on top of me, and got her stick to work in great style. As you may imagine, I was by this pretty well knocked out, and I don't know how matters would have gone, only that a boat's crew of *Badgers* just then came on the scene, and dragged the hag off me, swearing, kicking, and striking right and left until one of the men gave her a poke with a bayonet, when she suddenly calmed down, and started to raise the Malay death-wail.

'And she had cause too, for Peter pegged out before we got him on board. Mine turned out to be nothing much worse than a flesh-wound, although I'd lost a lot of blood from it.

'As you may guess, the skipper of the *Badger* was in a pelter when he'd heard my story. Certainly I had no witness, and the hag kept her mouth as close as a rat-trap. But we got over that. There was a Malay interpreter on board, and he gave the captain a hint. So, when the woman heard that she was to be taken back to Perak, her native place, and there handed over to the tender mercies of the Sultan—at that time our very good friend—she made a clean breast of everything, including the attempt to poison me with the juice of the klang-klang berries. Four hundred guilders was the price of Peter's connivance, and promotion to one of the Java lights if the plan succeeded.

'This confession of the hag's was a bit of luck for me, and Captain Cardigan complimented me in presence of the ship's company on the way I'd behaved, having undoubtedly saved the *Badger*, whose officer of the watch was steering by the false light when it suddenly disappeared. The captain also said that he would represent my conduct to the Admiralty. And that he kept his word,' said Harding, as he rose to 'go on deck' for a minute, 'my presence here proves. If you'll refill the kettle, I'll be back again in a very short time.'

'Ay,' replied Harding as he reseated himself, in reply to a remark of mine, 'I was lucky. But you mustn't think that I came here straight away. This—the prize of the service amongst the lights—is my sixth. So, you see, to some extent I've worked my way up, helped, of course, by the little matter I've been telling you, and together with what in my young days was called a very fair education. Well, the captain of the *Badger*—he's a rear-admiral now—wasn't the man to sit quietly down and let the Dutchman go scot-free. But not a stick of the *Bliksem* was to be seen throughout the Straits of Macassar. Still we kept on searching till, at last, the skipper of a country wallah told us he'd seen her off Breton, an island round in the Banda Sea. Sure enough, one morning, there we found her, at anchor off a native town. Now she was both faster, carried more men, and was more heavily armed than we were. But Captain Cardigan had made up his mind that there was to be no international row over the matter. It had to be settled as privately as possible, and strictly between the two ships.

'So, with the men at their quarters, guns run out, and the old *Badger* stripped for fight, we ranged up to the Dutchman in great style, with the hag in full view on the quarter-deck, and ordered—ay, ordered—the *Bliksem's* captain to come on board. And whether it was the sight of the hag, or that they were unprepared, I don't know, but, sir, he came, he and his first-lieutenant, and they were received at the gangway as if they'd been princes of the blood.

'Then our skipper and the first-lieutenant and the Dutchman all went below. What passed there I don't know; but presently they came up again—the Dutchman looking very sour. Then our gig was piped away, and the whole party got into her. I managed to slip in too, and off we went to a little lump of an island "pigeon-shooting," as I heard the first-luff whisper to the doctor.

'Well, the two skippers and their lieutenants put their hands in their pockets, and strolled away into the bush. Presently our second-luff and the doctor, each carrying a hand-bag, strolled after them. Nobody else left the boat. In about ten minutes we heard a couple of shots, then two more. "Sport's good!" said one of the muddies. But the master, who was in charge of the boat, never winked.

'After a while the party came strolling back again. But Van Helder, the Dutch captain, walked lame, and had his arm in a sling. And there was blood on the doctor's hands as he washed them in the sea. Also, as we pulled on board again, I noticed from where I sat that our skipper had a neat round hole through his cocked hat, and that the gold lace on his right shoulder epaulet was badly damaged. As they were getting aboard their own boat, I looked at the Dutch lieutenant—he was the same fellow who'd called me an English rascal at Mat Aris—and I said in the best of his lingo that I could manage, "At any rate that's one Dutch rascal who'll think twice before he sets traps for a British man-o'-war again."

'His hand went to his sword like a flash. But our second-luff, who understood, tapped him on the shoulder and pointed to the boat, and, with a black scowl, he got in.

'Also the hag was politely escorted down the gangway and transhipped. We had those Dutchmen fairly cowed, bluffed by our audacity and their own bad conscience.

'No, I never heard a word about the affair afterwards. I stayed with Captain Cardigan until he was promoted to the *Polyphenus* corvette, and I dare say I might have stuck to the service, only my shoulder was always a bit stiff, and got rather worse, if anything, as time went on. So I left, and, through the Captain's influence, got a light, and then others, and so on here. Now, it's a wild night, and you'd better turn in here till morning. No use trying to get back to town. I'm going to the telephone to talk to the pilot station.'

So I went to bed, and dreamed of Mat Aris and the hag, for whom I took Harding when he woke me for morning coffee.

PAST DAYS IN SOHO.

THERE is no doubt that etymology is a fascinating but at the same time a highly dangerous form of scientific amusement. When even the results of deep research are liable to be mistaken, it is little wonder that mere guesses at the derivation of words are so much oftener wrong than right. A good example of this kind of difficulty is to be found in the word 'Soho.' Some have considered that the neighbourhood owes its name to the cry with which footpads used to greet their victims when money was often sacrificed for the sake of life, while others believe that the name dated from the battle of Sedgemoor, when the word of rally to the Duke of Monmouth's men was 'Soho!'

The most probable theory, however, is that, when the City magnates hunted in Bayswater Fields and Shepherd's Bush, 'Soho' was the cry then used, much as 'Tally-ho' is now. Evelyn tells us in his *Diary* for the 27th of November 1690 that he 'went to London with my family to winter at Soho in the great Square,' which had been built about 1681. Few squares have had a more illustrious succession of inhabitants. The unfortunate Duke of Monmouth had a house there, and Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, before removing to Clerkenwell, lived in the Square, surrounded with curiosities of all kinds, one of which was said to be the original charter of King John.

The name of Sir Cloudesley Shovel the seaman, dear to the heart of most boys, is associated with the Square. Born in a fishing village of Norfolk, he was first apprenticed to a shoemaker, but preferring the freer life of the sea, ran away to become a cabin-boy, and ultimately a knight and commander-in-chief of the British fleets. He co-operated with the Earl of Peterborough in the capture of Barcelona in 1705; and two years later his ship, the *Association*, with about eight hundred men on board, struck on the rocks near Scilly, and the gallant admiral shared the same fate as his

crew. His body lay in state in Soho Square before being transferred to Westminster Abbey for burial.

The once-famous political adventurer, Baron Ripperda, who was at the head of so many intrigues in Spain and other countries, had a house in the Square in 1726; and here, too, a very different character, that fine old English gentleman, Sir Roger de Coverley, had his residence when in town, as we are assured by the *Spectator*.

Alderman Beckford, twice Lord Mayor of London, and perhaps better known as the father of the author of *Fathek*, was also an inhabitant.

One of the most famous of social caterers in former days was a certain Mrs Cornelys, who purchased in 1760 the house which had belonged to Charles Howard, Earl of Carlisle, and there, for ten years or so, entertained the world of fashion at her balls and concerts. The Duke of Queensberry, better known as 'Old Q,' was a frequent visitor, as was also the Duchess of Kingston, who on one occasion appeared as 'Iphigenia' in a state, as Horace Walpole has it, 'almost ready for the sacrifice.' At another of these masquerades a young lady wore the then unfamiliar costume of an Indian princess, three black girls bearing her train, while two negro boys held a canopy over her head. Merry as were no doubt the gatherings inside Carlisle House, the chairmen and servants outside found waiting for the revellers rather wearisome work, and seem to have been occasionally unruly, for Mrs Cornelys was forced to beg 'the chairmen and hackney-coach drivers not to quarrel or to run their poles through each other's windows!'

After some years of prosperity, however, evil days came upon Mrs Cornelys. Her concerts were found to infringe on the privileges of the Italian Opera House, and she became involved in litigation, added to which, 'Almack's' Club was drawing away the world of fashion to King Street, St James's. In 1772 the whole contents of Carlisle House were sold by auction; and Mrs Cornelys, after many changes of fortune, was reduced to the humble position of a 'vendor of asses' milk at Knightsbridge.'

Another house in the Square was the gathering-place for lovers not of fashion but of science. The owner was Sir Joseph Banks, a President of the Royal Society, who from his school-days had always been attached to the study of botany, not disdaining such knowledge as he could gather from old women cunning in the virtues of herbs and simples; while in the holidays no book gave him so much pleasure as a battered copy of Gerard's *Herball*. He accompanied in 1768 Captain Cook's expedition round the world in the good ship *Endeavour*, collecting many wonders of natural history, to be afterwards exhibited in Soho Square, where the Linnean Society met for many years before removing to Burlington House.

No part of London has more characteristic features than Soho, that rather vague district lying between Oxford Street and Leicester Square. It is Bohemian and artistic, no less than cosmopolitan. The very name calls up visions of old curiosity shops, musical instru-

ment makers, and cheap foreign restaurants, where here and there one can dine as on the Continent. It has also been said—which is less to its credit—that Soho can boast of quite as many smells as Cologne. Dinky as the neighbourhood is, many of the Queen Anne houses tell their own tale of past magnificence. They have spacious entrance halls and fine staircases, and not many years ago it was possible to find fretted ceilings, frescoed walls, and inlaid floors; while marble mantel-pieces and carved oak panelling are still to be seen. When Soho was no longer the home of fashion, the aristocracy of talent still lived there. In Frith Street was born Sir Samuel Romilly, who effected so many much-needed reforms in our criminal law; and here the great critic Hazlitt died of cholera. In this street Mrs Inchbald wrote her *Simple Story* in 1790. Bishop Compton, Dean of the Chapel Royal in the reign of Charles II., has given his name to one street and his title to another. In Dean Street lived Sir James Thornhill, the painter, whose daughter married Hogarth. The whole district was formerly a favourite resort of artists. Sir Thomas Lawrence lived in Greek Street for the first four years of the present century; and here, too, Josiah Wedgwood exhibited the magnificent service which he made for the Emperor of Russia.

Gerrard Street has perhaps more literary associations than any other street in Soho. It was built about the year 1681, and it takes its name from Charles Gerrard, the first Earl of Macclesfield. Lord Mohun, the wild and adventurous, who fought a memorable duel with the Duke of Hamilton, was one of its inhabitants. A more worthy name is that of Dryden, who lived in a house described by himself as 'the fifth down on the left hand coming from Newport Street.' There he wrote in the ground-room next the street; and there, in the year 1703, he died, his funeral being disturbed, we are told, by a party of 'Mohocks,' flown with insolence and wine, who could not reserve their pranks for a more fitting occasion. Speaking of Dryden's home, Leigh Hunt says he never hesitated, tired though he might be, to go a little out of his way in order to pass through Gerrard Street, and so give himself the shadow of a pleasant thought.

In 1787 Edmund Burke also graced the street with his presence. At the famous tavern in this street called the 'Turk's Head,' Dr Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds founded, in 1764, the 'Literary Club,' which continued to meet there till 1783, when, their landlord dying, the Club migrated to new quarters. Among the original members the most famous names were those of Burke, Dr Johnson, and Goldsmith. Speaking of the Club, Sir John Hawkins says, 'We seldom got together till nine, preparing supper took up till ten, and by the time the table was cleared it was near eleven. Our evening toast was, "Esto perpetua."'

Boswell writes in April 1775: 'I dine Friday at the *Turk's Head*, Gerrard Street, with our Club, Sir Joshua Reynolds, &c., who now dine once a month and sup every Friday.' Sir John Hawkins seems to have been a very unpopular member, and a dispute with Burke ended in his retirement. On one occasion the knight

having refused to pay his portion of the reckoning for supper on the ground that he usually ate no supper at home, Johnson observed to one of the members: 'Sir John, sir, is a very unclubable man.'

Wardour Street, built about 1686, was named after the Lords Arundel of Wardour, and has been for many years, and still is, celebrated for its curiosity shops and its dealers in old pictures and *bric-à-brac*. This street was a favourite haunt of Charles Lamb, who took as much pleasure in strolling up there on a summer's afternoon as most other men in a country walk. Lord Macaulay, too, had a strong predilection for Wardour Street and its second-hand bookstalls.

The Church of St Anne, Soho, besides containing the tomb of Hazlitt, is also the resting-place of King Theodore of Corsica. Political troubles had compelled him to come to England, where, sad to relate, extravagance of living caused him to be committed as a debtor to the King's Bench Prison, from which he was only liberated to die, and owes his burial to a grocer who had known him in his more prosperous days.

In Newport Market, immediately behind Leicester Square, John Henley, familiarly known as 'Orator Henley,' was wont to hold his open-air discourses on religious and other subjects. He advertised the subject of his next oration in mysterious terms, to arouse curiosity and draw a crowd. In 1726 we find him renting rooms in the Market. Here, too, the father of Horne Tooke the economist kept a poulterer's shop. His son, however, preferred, as the story goes, to style him 'a Turkey merchant.' One other institution associated with Soho is the Bazaar, one entrance to which is in Soho Square, which was established in the year 1815, and for many years was a paradise for country cousins.

Such have been the varied fortunes of Soho, the features of which were but recently much altered by the formation of Shaftesbury Avenue. The full tide of life once again sweeps past—although it enters not—the houses, of which it may be truly said, 'The lights are fled, the garlands dead.'

THE POET'S HARP.

O FOR the poet's harp of golden strings!
Whose music is the echo of God's thought
With earth's familiar voices interwrought.
A far-off melody of lands divine,
Sung first by seraphs, who with awe incline
Before God's throne; thence sounding through the
spheres

It drops at last upon the poet's ears.
Or like a bird whose glad and buoyant wings
Have wearied of earth's heavy atmosphere,
It nestles in the poet's heart and sings
Sweet cadences that none but he can hear.
And as he listens all his being thrills
With rapture greater than his soul can bear,
And so he sings it to the woods and hills.

City Temple.

EMMA J. PARKER.

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THE LAND'S END OF INDIA.

CAPE COMORIN, the Land's End of India, and the extreme south of Travancore, lies about ten miles south of the main road leading from Tinnevely to Trevandrum, the capital of the state. The former is a station on the South Indian Railway, and thence there is a good transit service to Nagercoil, a clean and flourishing town, at one time connected with snake-worship, hence its name. It is the headquarters of the London Missionary Society in South Travancore, and is noted for its beautiful lace, made by native Christian women. Here you branch off the main road, and the most convenient mode of reaching the Cape is by jinrikisha. We left Nagercoil early in the morning, and our bearers started off at a good pace, too good to last, I thought; but I was agreeably surprised, for they covered the distance of ten miles in a little over an hour.

The road to the Cape is broad and metalled throughout, and maintained in excellent order, a credit to the Travancore Government. It passes through Kottar, a large and prosperous town with an extensive trade. There is an old Roman Catholic church here, in which the famous missionary, Francis Xavier, laboured three centuries ago. After leaving the town, the road makes a detour round a large tank, and is carried along its high embankment; here and for some distance farther on, the road is densely shaded with large banyan trees. We are now in the centre of the Nanjinad, a large and fertile valley, the most densely populated and richest part of Travancore. Presently we reach Suchindram, an ancient town possessing a large and handsome temple, which is considered very sacred, and whose god it is said is almost completely covered by a mass of valuable ornaments, the gifts of his faithful votaries. A large river skirts the town, crossed by a substantial iron girder bridge, replacing a curious old stone structure which stood for generations, and did good service in its day. Towards the Cape there are numerous villages, the most noticeable of which is Agasteeswaram,

the centre of demon-worship in this part of the country, and where the Shanar caste at one time mustered strongly.

Within two miles of the Cape we pass the Arambooly Lines, which consist of a chain of forts, about two miles in length, extending from the sea all the way to the hills. From the general appearance of the country, the position was well chosen for defence, and the approach to them in the beginning of the century must have been difficult. A mountain standing out prominently by itself in the immediate neighbourhood is called 'Medicine Hill,' and derives its name from the following legend. One of the gods had been sent to this hill to procure medicine to heal the sick and wounded of Rama's army, but instead of waiting to gather the necessary herbs, he lifted up the entire mountain, and carrying it a distance of a thousand miles, deposited it in its present position.

We are now at our journey's end, but the Cape being low, it is not seen a great way off, and we were first aware of our proximity to the ocean by the delightful sea-breezes which sweep around the low promontory. The whole district to the west is thickly covered with palmyra palms, interspersed with indigenous trees and shrubs, prominent amongst them being the curious umbrella tree with its dreaded thorns, while along the coast the tall stately cocoa-nut palm grows luxuriantly.

The only European dwelling in the place is the Residency, the sea-side resort of Her Majesty's representative in Travancore and Cochin. It stands on high ground quite close to the beach, and from the veranda can be seen the ancient Hindu temple to which thousands of pilgrims resort every year, Cape Comorin being considered one of the most sacred places in Southern India. A large concourse of people assembles there every month to perform the customary bathing and other ceremonies in honour of Durga, the presiding goddess of the place. All that can be seen of the temple from the outside is high white walls, ornamented with broad stripes of red paint,

the whole forming a large square court enclosing the temple, which has a flat terraced roof. All strangers and low caste people are rigorously excluded from entering within its precincts, so a minute inspection was impossible.

The temple is situated quite close to the sea, and the main approach to it is through the Brahmin street, which is kept scrupulously clean, and is connected at the other end with the native chuttram or rest-house, much frequented by the numerous pilgrims who come to perform their religious rites. Along the shore are several small stone buildings used as bathing places by the Brahmins; the beach elsewhere is rather rough, but there are one or two places where bathing can be indulged in with impunity. At the east end of the village there are two Roman Catholic churches, as most of the fishermen who live there profess that creed. It is interesting to watch these industrious people go out in the early morning to follow their vocation. I have seen a fleet of nearly two hundred boats go out together, mostly catamarans with a small sail, which is pulled down when the men begin their daily work. These catamarans are strange-looking boats of a very primitive description, and are constructed of three large logs of rough timber securely tied together. They are perfectly safe, though the waves freely wash over them; they cannot sink, and float in any position.

Cape Comorin is famous for its sand, of which I gathered many specimens, one reddish in colour, composed of crushed garnet and ruby; another black, formed of iron ore; and last, the celebrated 'rice sand,' curiously shaped grains of chalcedonic quartz, very like rice in appearance. Regarding the rice sand many legends are told. The most popular one is that when the god Siva was on his way one night to marry the goddess privately, he found he was too late to reach the place before the break of day. So he reluctantly returned whence he came; and the rice, which had been prepared for the wedding festivities, was petrified, and cast on the beach, hence the 'rice sand.'

In conclusion, I must not omit to mention that two low black rocks, a short distance from the shore, form the last point of land in the great Indian peninsula.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER X.

UNDOUBTEDLY the least excited individual present amid that now turbulent group of mutually arresting, vociferating, protesting people outside the gate of the Summer Gardens was the Emperor himself. Though somewhat pale and agitated, the Tsar maintained his dignified composure throughout the scene. Not so Dostoief. The aide-de-camp had, upon hearing the report of the pistol, been instantly thrown into the wildest state of excitement, and was engaged in issuing frenzied orders to the four or five policemen present, to surround the group of spectators in order that no person might leave the spot, when the Emperor summoned him to his side.

'Dostoief,' said the Tsar, 'there is no need to arrest every one; I trust and believe this was the

irresponsible act of some poor lunatic. Did you happen to see from which spot the attack was made?'

Dostoief was obliged to confess that he had been looking in the opposite direction.

'It so happens,' the Tsar continued, 'that I did catch a glimpse of the pistol barrel at the moment that the shot was fired. Do you see the two men struggling together—an officer and a young student; the shot proceeded from one of these two. God grant it may not have been the officer, though the people seem to be combined against him. Go in and hear what is being said. Let any who saw the affair be retained as witnesses.'

Dostoief shouldered his way into the crowd, inquiring right and left whether any one had seen how and by whom the attack was made. No one volunteered information, though one or two declared they had heard the shot whistle past their ears. But Dostoief was in the centre of the disturbance in a moment, where a small group was still swaying and struggling and vociferating, the noisiest item of all being the student, who was clinging fast to Philipof's arm, while he explained at the top of his voice that he had been just in time to lay hold of the officer as he was taking a deliberate shot at his Majesty from behind the backs of the crowd. Several others, including one of the policemen, had secured a hold upon Philipof, in whose ears the buzz of voices and the frenzied accusations of the student sounded miles away, his intelligence being in a whirl by reason of the sudden and most unexpected turn that events had taken.

Philipof's back was turned as Dostoief approached, and the latter did not therefore realise until actually at his side the identity of this officer whom public opinion seemed to accuse of the crime of attempted regicide.

'Good God, Philipof!' he exclaimed, falling back as he recognised the prisoner, 'has it come to this? You, of all men—an officer in the pay of the Tsar—to lay hands upon the Lord's anointed!' The colour left Dostoief's face as he spoke, and he looked as though he would faint. The red rushed back to Philipof's cheeks, however, at the other's words.

'Nonsense,' he muttered hoarsely; 'don't be a fool, man. Why should I do such a thing? This is the assassin, here. What are these idiots holding me for? This is the man, this student, and there's his pistol at his feet. Tell these fools to let go of me.'

At this the student pattered off with marvellous smoothness a story of how he had seen the officer of the Okhotsk—known to be a discontented regiment—examine a pistol as he came along the quay, believing himself to be unobserved; how he had suspected that the man could be up to no good in this place with a pistol, and had followed him to the gate of the Gardens, and stood by him to watch for the Tsar's arrival. When the Emperor drove up, the officer of the Okhotsk had furtively raised the pistol from behind the rest of the crowd—he watching the proceeding from the corner of his eye—and had pulled the trigger at the instant that he, the student, turned and dashed it from his hand—thereby saving the Emperor's life.

Dostoief, ghastly pale, heard this tale out to the end. At the student's reference to the dis-

content of the Okhotsk officers, he had given a great start, as though the suggestion threw light on the matter, and had fixed his eyes in horror upon the accused person. Then he inquired aloud whether there were any present who could bear out the version which the student had given of the occurrence. No one had seen anything clearly, but one or two uttered exclamations of assent on hearing the student's story. Dostoief beckoned up the police, each of whom had made several arrests.

'Let those people go,' he said, 'and take these two to the fortress. The rest of you disperse the crowd.'

Philipof was thereupon placed upon a droshky and driven, escorted by two policemen, to the prison at the fortress, the student being carried off in the same way by two others; Dostoief rejoined the Tsar and the crowd dispersed. To the Emperor's immeasurable surprise, Dostoief could say nothing in reply to his inquiries, for sobs choked his utterance, and the Tsar, touched by his friend's devotion to his person, bade him get into his droshky and drive back to the palace, where the matter could be talked over in private when the agitation from which Dostoief seemed to suffer should have subsided. But, arrived at the palace, an explanation was inevitable, and Dostoief stammeringly described his short interview with the two arrested persons. The officer, he explained, protested his innocence, and accused the student, while the latter told a circumstantial tale incriminating the other, who was a member of the Okhotsk regiment.

'The Okhotsk!' repeated the Tsar, flushing as though with sudden pain. 'That is significant, Dostoief; the Okhotsky may feel that they have a grievance, poor fellows; and yet surely, surely my own officers, wearing my uniform and receiving my pay—no, no, Dostoief! This poor starving student—poverty may have driven him out of his senses; but the officer is innocent. What is your own opinion?'

'God grant that your Majesty's may be correct!' said the aide-de-camp.

'Do you happen to know this officer's name?' the Tsar asked, after a pause. Dostoief flushed scarlet, and then paled to the hue of milk.

'Philipof, sire!' he muttered hoarsely.

The Tsar heard him without remark. Suddenly the name seemed to recall something to his mind. 'Philipof?' he repeated. 'My God, Dostoief—not your'—Dostoief inclined his head, the picture of shame and misery.

The Tsar took several turns up and down the room without speaking, his face expressing all the pain that the communication gave him. Dostoief was silent also. Presently the Tsar stood over against his companion, his eyes full of compassion.

'Dostoief,' he said, 'I have decided that you shall drive to the fortress—now, at once—with orders for this Philipof's release. He is innocent, I am convinced of it; if either of these men is guilty, it is the poor student. You may tell Philipof that I scorn to suspect an officer, wearing the uniform of one of my regiments, of the crime of assassination.'

Dostoief slowly shook his head, but prepared to depart.

'Why do you shake your head?' the Tsar asked.

Dostoief stopped. 'My unfortunate relative has been in a curious mood of late,' he said. 'I have thought once or twice that he is scarcely responsible for his actions. His wounds and his disappointments in the Crimea seem to have affected him injuriously.'

'Do you mean that you believe him to be guilty or capable of this attempt?' said the Tsar.

Dostoief would gladly have shielded Philipof, though he did not greatly love him, if he had felt able to do so honestly, but he sincerely believed him to be guilty of the crime of which he was accused. Though no longer very fond of his pugnacious relative, who was yet Olga's cousin and a former intimate friend of his own, he would, on the whole, have preferred to see him acquitted and released. But Dostoief could not help recalling Philipof's wrath at the time of their interview with the Emperor Nicholas, as well as certain disloyal remarks directed on more than one occasion against the present Tsar. Putting this and that together, he felt that it was possible—nay, even probable—that the unfortunate young officer had actually lost his head by reason of his real or imaginary wrongs. Consequently, Dostoief was a very bad advocate for Philipof in this emergency, for devotion to the Tsar was at all times the first motive with him, and his wife's feelings, his own honour, Philipof's safety, and everything else must be subordinated to that sacred consideration. Moreover, being a human being, though, as he believed, a just one, Dostoief was possibly prejudiced against Philipof by an unworthy feeling of jealousy, as one whom Olga had once devotedly loved. But if Dostoief felt this, he did not admit it even to his own conscience. At any rate, the Tsar must be protected, whatever happened.

'I fear my unhappy relative is capable of even so terrible an act as this in his present condition of mind; with shame and horror I confess it,' he said.

The Tsar looked very grave. He paced about the room, muttering to himself, his handsome features working with the agitation into which Dostoief's words had thrown him.

'Dostoief,' he said at length, 'I would willingly give this man the benefit of the doubt—for your sake. Why not err on the side of clemency? If I forgave him this time, he would assuredly never commit a like offence again.'

'If your Majesty will permit me,' Dostoief resumed, taking advantage of the Tsar's hesitation, 'I would suggest that this man, as well as the other, should be detained pending inquiries. At present there is nothing but the word of the one against that of the other. As for the accident of Philipof's connection with myself—by marriage—your Majesty is generous to think of such a thing, but what is that in comparison with the consideration of the safety of your person, sire?'

'But your wife?' asked the Tsar; 'would it not affect her very deeply if the man were suspected and detained on suspicion of this crime? I do not forget what you have told me as to his intimacy with her in other days; I would spare her, Dostoief.'

'My wife is loyal, your Majesty,' said the last-

named; 'she would never shield her own relative at the expense of her sovereign.'

The Tsar resumed his thoughtful walk up and down the room. Presently he approached Dostoief and laid his hand kindly upon his shoulder. 'I thank you, Vladimir Ivanitch,' he said, 'for your devotion; you have proved it beyond a doubt this afternoon. I think we will detain the unfortunate man, as you advise, that inquiries may be set on foot. I trust—I pray that Philipof, both as my officer and as your relative, may be found innocent. In any case I shall remember his provocation. It may be that he saved my life instead of attempting to take it. God grant we may learn the rights of this matter, Dostoief.'

The Tsar's eyes were full of tears; this was his first collision with the disaffected of his subjects, and he felt all the sadness of it.

(To be continued.)

WITH A STEAM-LAUNCH ON THE ORINOCO.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE 'AUGUSTA.'

PART II.

AFTER her return from Marguanta the *Augusta* was handed over to a qualified engineer for thorough overhaul and repair; and all hope of reaching the Amazonas being abandoned, we settled down to await the next steamer to Trinidad. Two days later, however, the Citizen received news that his presence was urgently required in New York; and as the steamer he must catch sailed from Port of Spain two days before the Bolivar steamer was due there, in the *Augusta* lay our sole hope of arriving in time.

But a journey of some three hundred miles in a launch whose steaming powers had proved, to say the least of it, extremely uncertain, was too ticklish an undertaking to be lightly entered into, and it was not until all the members of our party had expressed not only their willingness, but also their eagerness to go, that with some misgiving the voyage was decided on.

From Bolivar the Orinoco runs eastward through sparsely-populated savannah country as far as the small town of Barrancas, about one hundred miles from the coast, where it splits up into the numerous passages which form the delta. Here the country is low, flat, and covered by dense forest-jungle, the greater part of which is annually half-submerged during the rainy season.

Excepting a small nomadic population of Guaraunos Indians, living chiefly in the trees, this immense tract is totally uninhabited, and a breakdown in this portion of the trip, when entirely beyond the possibility of human aid, was our principal fear. Nor was the seventy miles of sea voyage from the river-mouth to Port of Spain without its element of danger, as the traffic on this part of the coast-line is so insignificant that a disabled boat might easily be carried out to the broad Atlantic without sighting a single succouring ship. And the tide runs strong through the Boca

del Serpo. But of this later. The first thing was to engage two new men, and this—bitterly did we repent it—was done hurriedly, with the natural result that never were greater ruffians shipped than these new hands of ours.

First in order of demerit came José, a half-caste Portuguese, incautiously vouched for by Antonio. A mean, sallow, little man with an aquiline nose, slightly prominent teeth, and beady eyes, he so forcibly recalled a half-starved sewer rat that one constantly felt inclined to set a trap or whistle up the dogs. Shipped as a sailor, he proved utterly incapable and ignorant of his work, a scarce surprising fact considering that his former avocations had been those of acolyte, gambling-house keeper, soldier, and 'contrabandista'—chiefly contrabandista, he proudly affirmed—and admitted a certain familiarity with every prison-house in the country.

Compared to José, Pedro, the new piloto, was eminently respectable, his chief idiosyncrasies being laziness, a sullen temper, and an inordinate affection for intoxicants.

The crew engaged, fuel was our next care. On the Orinoco wood is almost exclusively used for this purpose, and on the main stream there is a plentiful supply; but in the wet jungles of the delta it is more difficult to obtain, much time having to be expended in selecting and cutting it.

To obviate any difficulty arising there, we filled the *Augusta's* bunkers full of coal, besides stacking a large quantity of wood round the boilers, till the boat sat deep in the water.

Eight A.M. was the hour fixed for our departure, but united punctuality is difficult of attainment, and it was quite noon before the white members of the expedition were gathered round the boat.

We reckoned on compassing the run to Port of Spain within forty-eight hours; and during the first part of the voyage this hope held fair promise of fulfilment, for by midnight we were off the fort of Castillo Guiana, where we were bound by Venezuelan rules to have our ship's papers inspected before obtaining permission to proceed seawards. This almost certainly implied vexatious delay; therefore, as we were well on the farther side of the river, here nearly two miles wide, we made up our minds to run through without stopping, leaving the garrison the option of staying us with their gun if they could. And it cannot honestly be said that hereby we incurred any mentionable risk, as it was of common knowledge that though the fort boasted two beautiful Krupp guns, not a man in the province had mastered their manipulation.

We reached Barrancas, a small mud-town on the left bank, about two A.M., and a sorely-needed supply of wood was with much difficulty obtained from a Teutonic merchant to whose house José guided us, and who, after much awakening, greeted our explanations and request with an angry torrent of guttural and untranslatable German, evidently at the offset mistaking us for smugglers, with whom Barrancas is a favoured resort.

After two hours' delay we steamed out of Barrancas, and leaving the main stream turned into the Rio Macareo, one of the larger delta passages. But just as a new day was born in full western magnificence, the launch's speed showed signs of

slackening, and shortly the screw almost stopped revolving.

Examination disclosed that the unaccustomed coal-dust had completely choked the boiler-tubes, so the *Augusta* was immediately steered alongside a high, steep, clay-bank, in one part of which a small break offered safe footing, and on to this José was instructed to leap with a rope. But he shrinkingly eyed the lawny swirling water, nervously glanced at the narrow foothold, hesitated, and was lost. Urged by an adroitly applied boot-toe he sprang, but sprang too late; for, instead of landing on the broken bank, he struck full against the wet clayey cliff and slid quickly back towards the dreaded water. But a friendly root intervened, and to this he clung with a tenacity born of frantic fear, casting backward the while horror-stricken glances at each ripple of the current, and spasmodically contracting his legs to keep them from the hidden dangers beneath, his face assuming a dark green tint, and his rat's eyes visibly protruding from their sockets through the sheer intensity of his uncontrollable terror. One end of the rope being still round his body and the other attached to the drifting launch, we on board gleefully waited the final scene, Antonio cheering the miserable man by shouting 'Miré! José, cayman, cayman!'

The rope lifted and tightened, and José's body stood out at right angles to the cliff; the strain increased, one hand gave way, then the other, and with the shriek of a soul eternally lost, José splashed into the yellow flood, through which he was rapidly towed by willing hands, his gurgling half-smothered profanities drowned by our delighted screams of laughter. Then we made him swim with the rope to the nearest landing-place, where, after mooring the boat, he sat sharpening his knife, threatening evil things against us all, and looking more like a drowned rat than ever!

It is noticeable that a man's misfortunes frequently have an exhilarating effect on his comrades, consequently we now set to work quite cheerily to clean out the fouled tubes, a tedious and dirty job, but not to be shirked; and an hour later we cast off again, hoping against hope for sufficient breeze to counteract the fouling by making the furnace draw. But never a breath came to ruffle the slumbering surface of the water, never a passing zephyr to momentarily lift the cloud of feverish steamy vapour that now hung heavy over the river-bed. Nature was weeping to-day! Every leaf of the dense forest jungle, that rose like an impenetrable wall of green on either bank, shivered and rustled in the rebound, as it sped its tiny drop of fluid to join the mighty waters that carry their coloured trace far into the blue Atlantic. The long, drooping palm-fronds formed ceaseless runnels, and glistening tears gathered thick on the outspread leaves of the giant water-lilies.

Poised on one leg beneath the darker foliage on the overgrown bank, the great solemn blue cranes stood in melancholy solitude, seeking, with sunken head and ruffled plumes, what shelter they could; while even the tireless kingfishers, darting from bough to bough, from time to time impatiently shook the too-clinging moisture from their sheeny feathers. Now and again a smile broke through the tears. Then the sunlight penetrated suffi-

ciently the upper fringe of our misty covering to suffuse the whole with a wondrous rosy flush, deep-coloured and solid-seeming, almost at arm's reach overhead, but paling to invisible yellow ere meeting the water; through this shot countless golden bars and beams culminating in half-suggested rainbows, whose iridescent tints, reflected from the river and every dripping leaf-tip, were thrown back to the atmospheric moisture to be buffeted about without cease till the smile lingeringly vanished and the tears came again.

In this dense, still atmosphere the fires refused to draw, and the launch did little more than crawl through the muddy water.

Signs of dissatisfaction here became apparent amongst the crew, who, doubtless fearing a protracted sojourn in this inhospitable and deadly region, demanded that we should make the best of our way back to Barrancas; but a threat to drop the ringleader, José, into the element he abhorred averted any immediate outbreak on their part, though all day they remained sullen and defiant, even the formerly faithful Antonio being weaned from his allegiance by José's evil communications.

By ten o'clock things had come to such a pass that it became necessary to run alongside once more in order to thoroughly strip and cleanse the smoke-box and tubes; so we steered for a low-lying sandbank, which on approach was found to be tenanted by an enormous cayman.

A Winchester bullet just behind the shoulder, where the skin is thinnest, sent him floundering into the water, where for some minutes he wallowed about, staining the dark stream with his blood.

The sight of his dreaded foe turned José green again, besides strengthening his resolution not to attempt another jump ashore; and on being somewhat forcibly pressed, he quickly whipped out a knife, and possibly would have stabbed had not an equally-ready revolver coolly placed between his eyes effectually reminded him of the ancient adage *anent discretion and valour*.

Whilst the cleaning was in progress loud snarling roars heard in the adjacent jungle were pronounced by the natives to proceed from the throat of a 'tigre'—the formidable jaguar of these jungles.

This statement, albeit received with considerable incredulity, sufficed to send the two keenest sportsmen into the forest in hopes of a shot.

Scrambling through a creek choked with bulrushes many times higher than our heads, we climbed up the clay-bank and attempted to push through the dense undergrowth in the direction of the turmoil. More easily said than done!

The profound density of that tropical forest is indescribable; thorns, palms, lianas and other creepers were bound together in an elastic but impenetrable mass, and it was only by crawling on all-fours that any progress was possible. Fearsome creatures, but half-seen in the sombre forest shade, wriggled away through the ooze at our approach; and at each step swarms of mosquitos rose from the decaying vegetation, settling with determined ferocity on every available bare spot of skin. Once we ran our heads against what seemed a thick liana, but which, twisting rapidly away, proved to be a

large anaconda. Unfortunately, he was out of sight before a rifle could be disentangled.

Suddenly a deep-throated roar resounded in a tree just over our heads, and, looking up with tingling nerves, we found it had been emitted by nothing more formidable than a large gibbon, which, not being deemed worthy of powder and lead, was left unmolested; and torn, bleeding, dripping with perspiration, and half-frantic from mosquito poison, we returned, a sorry spectacle, to the launch.

All day long we kept Antonio busy at the tubes, and every two hours ran alongside to strip the smoke-box, our progress in consequence being very slow and tedious.

Towards sundown dry wood was again urgently requisite, and the piloto saying he knew of a place where a quantity was stacked, a bright lookout was kept for it or for any Indians who might direct us to it. Nor had we long to wait before, in the far distance—the mist had lifted somewhat—a curiara was espied paddling up slowly close to the opposite bank. Towards this we directed the launch; but, to our dismay, no sooner did the occupants observe the alteration of our course than they set off vigorously in the opposite direction, with the obvious intention of eluding us. Such unexpected behaviour nettled us, so, turning on all possible steam, we started in pursuit, the chase—though its termination was certain—becoming for a space fairly exciting. Interest was further raised when it was seen that the canoe, instead of being manned by Indians, was full of black men. Then José, standing up in the bows, gave a shout of recognition, immediately answered from the curiara, whose occupants at once ceased paddling. They were José's old contrabandista associates running a choice little cargo to Barrancas, and told us that when they saw the *Augusta* in pursuit they mistook her for a Custom's launch, and thought that unless they could gain the shelter of a shallow creek near at hand a dreary term of imprisonment was their certain lot.

The suppression of smuggling being none of our business, after some questioning regarding the wood store, of which, it appeared, these men knew nothing, we passed on, shortly to be boarded by two curiaras full of wild-eyed, naked Guaraunos, trying to sell or barter manatee flesh. For a small portion of this they demanded five dollars, probably the only sum of money they had ever heard of; it is more than doubtful if any of them had ever owned such an amount. They willingly accepted three biscuits and a like number of decayed bananas in exchange for the meat, and pushed off evidently quite content with the bargain.

Wood was now required at any cost, and though mangrove, as it burns like paper, is scarcely the fuel one would choose if choice there was any, still it was preferable to none; and, with seventy miles of sea to cross, we could ill afford to be over-particular.

Picking out the driest patch of mangroves, we ran the *Augusta* right under their overhanging boughs, the lighter of which we tore down on deck, while José and the Mikado, armed with machetes, clambered up the trees to chop the weightier branches. But they did not stay long. Frantic gestures and sharp exclamations, quickly

taken up by those on board, preceded a precipitate and undignified return; and in a few moments the *Augusta* seemed to be tenanted solely by irresponsible muttering madmen, clutching and tearing at their clothing, and dancing wild antics in the shrouded light of a misty moon.

Alas! red ants! Ants in their thousands, in their myriads, had invaded us, creeping over everything, over clothing, under clothing, fastening their powerful, virulent forceps into every possible soft spot, till not a square inch of skin was left unattacked by these fearless little brutes. Wherever the lantern-light struck on the deck it showed a steadily advancing red-black stream, solid as the ranks of a Zulu impi; the white paintwork totally disappeared, and soon the planks were slippery with the trodden dead.

Horrible as was the irritation, fuel was at that moment more precious than skin; so for some time we valiantly resisted the assaults of our ever-increasing foe, till at last, ignominiously defeated, we had to haul out of action, carrying the innumerable boarding-party with us. Warm waxed the battle while we stacked the broken wood; then without warning the invaders vanished—vanished as completely as Kipling's lost legion—leaving their mutilated dead lying as they fell.

Where did they go to? Did they all seek shelter in the decaying wood and perish miserably by detachments as each fresh log replenished the ravening fire? Or did that reckless army march headlong overboard, giving millions of writhing bodies to feed the ever-watchful fish? Of a certainty we know not; but sure it is that at rise of day not one living ant was anywhere visible—not even a belated foraging party in the sugar-bowl, or a laggard looter amongst the tempting ripe bananas.

One o'clock saw us round the last bend of that endless river, and steaming slowly—ah! so slowly—out to the calm, glassy sea.

A long sandspit runs out somewhere across the mouth of the river; and, though not marked on the chart, we judged it, from the lie of the land, to be on our starboard side. But as the piloto vehemently declared it was to port, we permitted him to steer southwards in order to clear it, surrendering our better judgment to his presumed local knowledge. For more than half-an-hour he steered this course; then we interfered and insisted on making straight for Trinidad, setting the course by compass north-north-west, between the Soldado Rock and Icacos Point.

José and Pedro said they knew nothing of the compass, they did not believe in it and would not steer by it; but they did know their way anywhere in the dark, needed no beacon or land as a guide, and would not be dictated to by any the reverse of blessed Gringo.

Accordingly they set the boat's head due west—an impossible course—and we resented it, whereupon resulted fierce argument, sharp hissing words and hot replies, knives snatched half-out of tightly-grasped sheaths, and revolvers cocked with that peculiarly significant click that, heard in the hands of an adversary, marshals a man's delinquencies hurriedly before his eyes, and coldly checks the whirling passion in his brain.

Georgi alone took no part in the controversy,

but stood stolidly by his engines, yawning. A scuffle seemed imminent, but the boat stopped it—and herself—the tubes were again hopelessly choked. So recognising the folly of attempting farther progress till morning, we let go the anchor and ordered every one to bed—the Citizen, whose turn it was, remaining alone on watch.

Few of us had closed eyes for fifty hours, so peaceful sleep came quickly now—not to last long. We were awakened by the Citizen whispering that the crew were up to some mischief again; and rising quietly, saw them gathered together in front of the boiler talking excitedly one with the other. The Mikado was forward; Georgi still slept, and it was useless to attempt to arouse him. So we others, revolver in hand, crept up behind the boiler, and appearing suddenly one on either side, ordered the men to stop talking, and go to bed. For answer came a volley of curses, the quick flash of knives, and an incipient rush; but two steady barrels checked that.

A solitary lantern threw its uncertain light on angry scowling faces, José's evil countenance dark with hate, and his deep-set eyes red with the lust of blood. But he knew the barrel that covered him, and knew that his life must pay forfeit to the first move. Discarded knives rang dull on the wooden deck, and sullenly the defeated conspirators retired to their various sleeping-places. The momentary danger was past.

Another tropical day upspringing ready-armed from the eastern horizon revealed our position, confirming the surmises of the previous night. Fifty yards from the starboard bow lay a long sandy promontory covered with jagged rocks, on to which our trusty Pedro had been steering us. Westward—José's course—was the forest-lined Gulf of Paria, while north-north-west, in the morning mirage, the rugged Soldado stood high above the sea, Icaos Point and the lofty mountains of Trinidad showing blue in the distance.

Slowly the crew's rascally plot dawned on our minds. Without doubt the first scheme was to run the *Augusta* on the sandspit, when José, under pretence of seeking assistance, would have brought some of his smuggling friends to float her for their own purposes. This failing, probably the next idea was to steer us to some hidden haunt of the contrabandista, where the launch and its contents would have formed an acceptable addition to the stock-in-trade; and as for us—well, smugglers of José's type are not apt to be over-scrupulous. Death is simple, and dead men tell no tales.

Our unlooked-for insistence having frustrated both these plans, possibly the next object of the conspiracy was to quietly put the one on watch out of the way as he went forward to look to the lights, then finish the others whilst they slept, and so not risk the interposition of these troublesome straight-shooting revolvers.

At eight o'clock, by which time the tubes had once more been cleaned, a fair breeze sprang up, and with furnaces drawing merrily we faced the open sea. After rounding Icaos Point the current ran strongly, and an ever-increasing head-wind gradually raised a heavy sea, through which the *Augusta* threshed her way slowly but steadily all day long in a cloud of spume and spray.

Towards mid-day the utter hopelessness of

making Port of Spain became apparent, for both wind and sea were rising apace, while our fuel-stack diminished with alarming celerity. Obviously the best course was to run for La Brea, where there is a pier from which the crude material from the celebrated Pitch Lake is loaded on ships, and where we trusted to obtain a fresh stock of fuel and water. La Brea is forty miles from Port of Spain, and the *Irrawaddy*, the ship we had come for, sailed from there next morning for New York.

Hour after hour passed, and still no sign of La Brea, and we began to think we had missed it in the rain-clouds. Above the mingled noises of the storm Antonio's voice rang out as he viciously banged the furnace door—'Dat's de last log; on'y little more coal.' 'Break up the bunker lids,' was the reply; and the bunker lids fed the fire. The cushions went next, and were followed bit by bit by the seat and locker linings. We looked at each other in silence. Soon there would be nothing combustible left, and then, a short drift, a sharp rip on the cruel bare rocks, a final plunge, and good-bye, *Augusta*! But as the cheering rays of hope will penetrate the darkest cloud of despondency, so now the glimpse through the rain-drift of a large steamer, outlined black against the piled masses of gray storm-clouds, renewed our energy, and spurred us on to further exertions. Something familiar in her appearance struck us, and immediately three pairs of glasses scrutinised her minutely. Then a simultaneous cheer, 'The *Irrawaddy* at the pier; up with the flag!'

'The first streak of luck we've struck this trip,' declared the Citizen, as we forged towards the big ship. 'She must just have finished loading, and is off to the Port.'

It was now past six o'clock, and the chill fear crept over us that in the fast-gathering darkness she might slip out without observing us. This was soon dissipated by the appearance of a small group of men on the pier-head gazing in our direction, and evidently wondering what manner of boat lay behind that constant sheet of spray through which was visible at times a puff of smoke and the flutter of the stars and stripes. For the boats are not many that pass through the Serpent's Mouth.

'Rip up the wood, lads—rip up the wood, and throw it freely on the fire, for to-night we shall dine sumptuously, and sleep in soft linen, and wash, and be clean again.'

At last we were alongside. The Citizen went first to explain our plight; we others climbed after him, and four of the most disreputable-looking creatures in Christendom stood together on the *Irrawaddy's* quarter-deck. Want of sleep, scant feeding, and no small anxiety, combined with drenching wet, greasy coal-dust, unconventional clothing—the Mikado was airily attired in pyjamas—and the total disregard of soap and razors had scarce improved our appearance, and the lady passengers looked both horrified and indignant to see us led off to the best first-class cabins. All hail to you, good men of the *Irrawaddy*, for your generous treatment of a sore fatigued crew. The captain agreed to tow the *Augusta* to Port of Spain next morning; so with every care lightened, and without the haunting fear of a glittering knife, we threw ourselves

down on springy mattresses once more, and slept the sleep of exhaustion.

Daylight saw us steaming for the island capital, the *Augusta* towing bravely astern, with steam up in case of emergency. Tropical storms pass speedily as a child's tears, and the morning was bright and calm. But the waves had not equalled the wind in the rapidity of their subsidence, and still ran high enough to send the spray flying high over the towing boat's funnel, and to necessitate the constant working of the pumps.

Arrived at our destination, the recalcitrant crew were sent about their business, José, true to his character, scowling and threatening to the last. We should have liked to hand them over to justice; but as they were all Venezuelan subjects, this meant great delay and possible trouble with the authorities (remembering our irregular proceeding at Castillo Guiana), and already there had been sufficient trouble in the country.

Next morning the *Augusta* had gained importance. A notice in the shipping column of the local paper read: 'American steamship *Augusta*, from Bolivar, in ballast.'

That was her epitaph.

DR MARTIN'S FURLOUGH.

CHAPTER IV.

THAT night I went down very early to the ball-room, oppressed by a feeling of anxiety which I could not lay aside. People were arriving fast. The musicians were tuning their instruments on the platform, letting slip now and then some long sweet phrase. I did not see Miss Merriman, but Champneys and his wife were busily receiving their guests; and there, to my astonishment, was Hunter also, beaming with smiles, as if he were in the highest spirits, moving quickly from group to group, with the manner of a man welcoming a host of old acquaintances. When he saw me, he hurried up and drew me a little aside, in spite of my reluctance. 'You see I am first on the field,' he said. 'You won a round against me this afternoon; but there may be another one to-night, and with heavier weapons.' His manner seemed to be extraordinary, it was full of such a childish glee. I tried to catch his eyes, but they wavered and avoided mine; and then I thought of an experiment.

'You must not talk like that,' I said, in a sharp tone of authority; 'it is against the rules.'

Hunter's face fell, his manner changed instantly, and he glanced up at me with a timid appealing look that told me at once my peremptory tone had carried back his wandering mind to the time when he was controlled by a personal attendant, but the effect was momentary. He recovered almost at once; and saying in a mocking voice, 'You think that very clever, but I am not in the least afraid of you,' he moved away, while I stood and watched him passing from group to group, with a cheerfulness of bearing which would have reassured any unprofessional observer about his mental state, but which on the other hand alarmed me indefinitely.

I made up my mind that I would not dance; and seeing my hostess bearing down upon me, I escaped into a small conservatory, where, half-hidden behind a tall palm, I watched for Miss Merriman's arrival. It was late before she appeared. The second dance was half over, almost everybody was dancing, and Miss Merriman stood for a few minutes in the empty doorway, looking so charming in her white ball-dress that I forgot my resolution not to dance, and was by her side at once.

'I am so tired this evening that I shall not fill up anything beyond twelve,' she said, giving me her card. 'How cheerful Major Hunter looks. If he were only always like that.'

'God forbid!' I said hastily. 'Don't dance with him more than you can help.'

She looked at me in some surprise; but before I could say more, Hunter left his partner for a moment standing near us, and coming up with a charming smile. 'Listeners never hear any good, I know,' he said, 'but let me cut across Dr Martin's disinterested cautions by begging you to disregard them far enough to give me a dance.'

She gave him her card with a half-frightened look; for indeed there was something uncanny in the quickness with which he had divined what we were talking about. As he was writing his name, he looked up and caught the expression on her face. His own changed instantly. 'Oh, if the ground is poisoned already, I really don't care about it,' he said, letting the card fall to the floor; 'there are plenty of cheerful partners to be found.' And without another word he left us. I picked up the card and gave it back to Miss Merriman, who said nothing, though she flushed to the roots of her hair, while her lips tightened over each other firmly.

At that moment the music ceased, and a crowd of men came up to beg for dances. My dance was not the next, so I retreated to my corner, where I stood watching the flashing whirl of gay dresses and pretty faces, amid which Hunter's handsome face came perpetually before my eyes, giving me each time a thrill of fear as I saw that wherever he might be his eyes were following Miss Merriman constantly.

When my dance came Miss Merriman was tired, and after taking only a few turns we went into the conservatory. My partner threw herself down on a seat with a sigh of pleasure. 'What a divine thing a ball is!' she said; 'don't you love dancing, Dr Martin!'

I know not how it was; the trivial question, the flashing excitement on the girl's face, the intoxication of the waltz—suddenly ten years dropped off my life, and I was again the gay lad who was once nowhere more at home than in such company. What I said I don't know, but it was something that made my companion laugh and blush; and I was admiring the charm of her expression when I heard a slight movement, and looking up, saw Hunter levelling a pistol through the shrubs. I sprang at him; but quick as I was, a ball whizzed past me quicker still; Miss Merriman sank back with a low cry, and slipped on to the ground; the next moment I was grappling with Hunter, who fought like ten men, and was

not secured until several of us had thrown our weight on him.

I hardly know what happened after that ; but I remember bending over Miss Merriman, who had slipped down upon the floor, and checking the officious helpers who were about to lift her up without ascertaining the extent of her injuries. The next thing which stands out clearly in my recollection is the aspect of the deserted ballroom through the long night which followed—the dim length of the room in which all lights were extinguished save those round a low bed on which Miss Merriman lay, the ghastly contrast between the half-seen decorations and the infinite sorrow which had suddenly stalked into that gay throng. Mrs Champneys was there, calm and helpful as I knew she would be. The local doctor was there too, an intelligent fellow, but with no experience of gunshot injuries. He told me the wound was mortal, and shook his head when I maintained that it was not necessarily so, and that the lung, though grazed, was not fatally injured. We had excluded all others from the room. The hours passed, the gray dawn deepened into daylight, and not a sound was heard save an occasional gasping breath, at every one of which Mrs Champneys, with all her composure, shuddered visibly.

So much is photographed on my mind, but I have no other memory than that of a long struggle, in which we fought death inch by inch, and often thought we had lost, yet won at last. Such times are too sorrowful to dwell on. I pass them by ; pass by too the long convalescence, the slow return of health as winter softened into spring, whilst I still lingered on at Outley, because my kind friends would not let me go, saying that I, and I alone, had saved the patient's life.

It was a happy time for me, and I love to dwell upon it. But my story is almost done, and I have only one more retrospect to give.

It was a brilliant evening at the end of May. I had been spending a month with my cousins in Scotland, and came back to Outley with a keener pleasure than I could quite account for. Champneys did not meet me at the station ; there was some excuse. I had been travelling since early morning, and the fresh air was delightful. It seemed to me that I had never seen anything more beautiful than the Somersetshire lanes, flaming with primroses all along their banks ; and what with the pleasure of returning to what I almost looked upon as a home, the sweet spring scents and the exhilaration of driving a strong and spirited horse, I think I had lost some of my sobriety and was in the mood in which anything might happen.

I suppose that even if I had been as steady in the head as I usually am, I should have hardly driven past Miss Merriman when I met her standing at the gate of the avenue, and beaming out a welcome with a face which was unaffectedly glad ; but I should not have flung the reins to the groom with such impetuosity, nor have leapt to the ground quite so recklessly as I did.

'How glad I am to see you again,' I cried ; 'and how much better you are looking. Why, you seem'—but at that point I broke off, for there was something in my companion's face which I had never seen there before, a struggling of tears and smiles ; a wistful tenderness, I know not what it was ; but my heart responded,

and I took her hands in mine. 'Are you so very glad to see me back?' I asked. For a moment she did not answer ; then with a sob that was half a laugh, she said : 'Oh, I have wanted you so dreadfully.'

And then—no, that is nobody's business. I don't know why I should say anything more, except that when we got near the house we met Champneys and his wife, walking together like lovers, as they were still, after ten years of married life. They had no sooner caught sight of us than Mrs Champneys clasped her hands and laughed out for pleasure.

'They have found it out !' she cried. And then the women went away together, and Champneys came and walked with me, his broad, jolly face beaming with sunshine. And in all Somersetshire there were not then, nor are there now, four happier people to be found.

THE MONTH : SCIENCE AND ARTS.

It would hardly be fitting to allow such an unique event as the Diamond Jubilee of our most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria to pass over without notice in the columns of a journal which has been before the public for something more than the sixty years which that celebration commemorates. During that long period the advancement of science and the arts has been greater than in any former years of the world's history. It is not one of the least benefits of this Diamond Jubilee that it has given so many opportunities to competent men to record the various steps by which that advancement has been made, and to compare the benefits accruing to mankind with those enjoyed at the commencement of the Queen's reign. We are thus made familiar with a section of British history which is too remote to be remembered by the rising generation, and at the same time too recent to be treated of in the textbooks.

In his lecture on sixty years' advancement in the fine arts, delivered a few weeks ago at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, Professor Herkomer defined the characteristic changes which had been brought about as, first, the development and destruction of the art of wood-engraving ; second, the development of the art of water-colour painting to the highest capabilities of the material ; and, third, the change in the type of art work from one essentially British to one of foreign tendency. He urged our artists to coax inspiration from the beautiful country in which their lot was cast rather than resort so much to the study of French models. Let them cherish their own surroundings—their cottage homes, farmsteads, village greens, and shady lanes, 'and let painters and poets paint and write in order to keep those treasures warm in our hearts.'

The terrible conflagration at a charity bazaar which has plunged Paris into mourning could hardly have occurred on this side of the Channel, where the safety of public buildings both as regards their construction and means of exit in case of danger is guarded so rigorously. The fire at Paris was so extraordinarily rapid in its progress that, according to an expert, 'even if there had been a very large force of the fire-brigade present

in the street at the actual moment of the outbreak, with the hose already laid out, it would have been impossible to have saved any portion of the building.' The suddenness of the outburst is no doubt primarily due to the highly combustible nature of the material upon which the cinematograph pictures (or living photographs) are printed. This is a ribbon of celluloid, each design necessitating a length of about eighty feet. The spent ribbon, after passing through the machine, is generally received in an open basket, and when this becomes full it represents a terrible source of danger should a spark reach it. The danger would be altogether obviated if it became the rule, instead of the exception, to receive the spent ribbon upon a revolving reel.

Commensalism is a new word which has been coined to express a kind of cousinship between animals, which differs from Parasitism in the fact that neither of the associated animals feeds on the tissues of the other nor lives at the other's expense. Commensalism was exhibited at the recent *conversazione* of the Royal Society (London) by the aid of certain small tanks of sea-water from the Marine Biological Association at Plymouth. In one of these tanks was seen a hermit crab, which, after the manner of its kind, had found a home in a discarded whelk shell. Upon this shell was firmly fixed a sea-anemone, which was thus carried from place to place on the sea-bottom. But the hermit not only provided lodging and transport for its guest, but food also; for the anemone bent down its fringed mouth to that of the crab and picked up the nourishment which the other let fall. Another instance of commensalism is seen in a species of worm which finds a lodgment in the groove on the underside of the arm of a starfish, the worm lying in such a position that its head is towards the starfish's mouth, so that it can partake of its host's food.

Another highly interesting exhibit at the same *conversazione* was Kamm's Zerograph or telegraphic typewriter. This instrument has the appearance of an ordinary typewriter, and can be worked by any one who knows how to spell, the message being automatically printed at a distant station, so that the attendance there of an operator is not required for receiving telegrams. The advantages claimed for the instrument comprise the absence of clockwork and the substitution of electric energy as the local motive power, the use of the instrument either as transmitter or receiver of messages, the possibility of converting it at a moment's notice into a sounder or needle instrument, the facility of operating on it by persons without any knowledge of electricity, and the fact that in time of warfare the messages cannot be picked up by an enemy 'tapping' the line.

It is well known that animals which are kept in darkness gradually lose the power of vision, and an oft-quoted instance is found in the fish which inhabit the dark waters of the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. Professor Vire, of the Paris Museum, has taken a great interest in the subject, and has kept various animals in caves away from light; but he is now about to extend his operations, and will conduct his experiments in some subterranean galleries, said to be of Roman origin, which have recently been discovered under the Jardin des Plantes. This strange underground

laboratory has recently been inaugurated. It is about forty feet below the level of the streets, and consists of a number of spacious chambers connected by long galleries. In these are arranged tanks for fish, and cages built into the rocks for various kinds of animals. Even when these creatures are tended and fed, the lanterns used will be screened with red glass. It is said that much interest is taken in the result of these experiments, and some go so far as to assume that a new type of creature may be produced under such novel conditions of life. However this may be, most humane persons will very greatly sympathise with the poor creatures who are to be thus consigned to the Paris Catacombs.

Thirsty folk will be pleased to hear that the penny-in-the-slot principle has been applied with success to the automatic distribution of drinks, and that the system, which has been in vogue for some time on the Continent, has now put in an appearance in London and some other of our cities. The metropolitan establishments consist of an open shop, round which are arranged a number of ornamented cabinets, each cabinet having from its front projecting two bent spouts, with the name of a drink above each, a slot for the necessary penny, and a support beneath for a glass. An attendant washes the glass after use, and replaces it in a rack ready for the next customer. The beverages are all of the temperance kind; but on the Continent alcoholic liquids are supplied in the same manner. The mechanism for working the apparatus is simple in the extreme: the coin which is inserted in the slot actuates a cam, which causes a tap to be turned for a certain definite period, the time being regulated by the nature of the beverage supplied—for example, a tumblerful of hop-ale or a wine-glassful of ginger-wine.

The last report from the British Consul at Rouen contains an interesting account of a bridge of peculiar construction which is to cross the Seine near that city. This novel engineering work is called a 'Pont Transbordeur,' and is designed to fulfil all the purposes of a bridge, while it will offer no obstruction to the passage of ships with towering masts. On each side of the river will be erected a small Eiffel tower, about one hundred and seventy feet in height, and these towers will be joined at the top by a lattice-work bridge upon which lines of rails will be laid. On these rails will run a skeleton platform, which can be pulled from side to side by the agency of steam or electricity. From this platform, which will be one hundred and sixty feet above the quays, will depend steel wire-ropes which will support at the level of the river-banks a slung carriage, large enough to accommodate a tramcar full of passengers, besides other vehicles. It is intended that this novel form of bridge shall be in connection with the tram system at both sides of the river, so that passengers can be carried across the river without leaving their seats in the cars. The work of building the towers has already been commenced, and it is expected that the bridge will be open for traffic in eighteen months' time. It is said that the only contrivance bearing any resemblance to this 'Pont Transbordeur' is in operation at Bilbao.

There is every hope that the British Association for the Advancement of Science will succeed in

the endeavour they are making to establish a seismic survey of the world. As Professor John Milne has recently pointed out, seismic disturbances find their origin oftener beneath the sea than upon the land, and numerous cases have occurred where submarine cables have been broken or disabled by their action. In the Gulf of Corinth severe earthquakes have been felt, and simultaneously the cables have been broken. Upon one occasion the sudden failure of the Australian cables gave rise to the belief that they had been cut purposely, until it was ascertained that the accident was due to volcanic action. This fact would have been ascertained at once had the colonies been provided with proper instruments. This submarine action is often accompanied by great changes in the level of the seabottom, in one case an increase in depth of no less than four hundred fathoms having been recorded by subsequent soundings. It will be seen, therefore, that the importance of establishing stations with proper instruments round about the oceans can hardly be overestimated, for the breakage of a cable means very great inconvenience and loss to trade. By such instruments not only can it be determined where a cable is parted by volcanic action, but submarine foci can be localised and avoided when new cables are being laid.

Some of our provincial photographic societies have of late years carried out a very praiseworthy enterprise in making a careful survey of the counties in which they are situated, and depositing a number of permanent photographs in illustration of that survey in public institutions. The Warwickshire collection, which finds a home in the Birmingham Free Library, may be cited as a typical instance of how such a scheme can be carried out, the pictures being of one size and mounted in a uniform manner. Such a collection is not only interesting to-day, but will be of immense service to the antiquary and historian of the future. Sir Benjamin Stone, M.P., has lately been in communication with the trustees of the British Museum with a view to extend this idea of photographic surveys, and he proposes that the Museum authorities should act as the custodians of a great national collection of pictures. In the course of a letter addressed to the trustees he remarks that 'the preservation of historical mementoes not only had an interest for antiquaries, artists, and photographers, but the motive appealed to the wider class of cultured people, who felt a national pride in the historical associations of their county or neighbourhood, in family traditions, or in personal associations.' We are glad to state that the trustees have met Sir Benjamin Stone's proposition with considerate attention, and suggest the appointment of an organising committee to carry it out.

'A Lover of Nature,' in writing to the *Daily Telegraph* on the subject of the protection of wild birds and their eggs, makes some very useful comments upon the course of present legislation in that direction. He regards the professional bird-catcher as a curse to our country lanes and wayside hedges in the autumn, and marvels at the law which holds sacred certain eggs to the 31st of July, but allows these men to snare the birds themselves just twenty-four hours later! He also holds up to ridicule an order recently issued by

the Home Secretary, upon application of one of the midland counties, whereby the taking or destroying of the eggs of sundry species of wild birds is prohibited under heavy penalties, for that order has been drawn up by some one with a very elementary knowledge of bird-life. The birds protected are some forty in number, and some are included in the list which never have bred and are never likely to breed in the county; while on the other hand, birds which have the most conspicuous claims to the fullest protection are left out in the cold altogether. As an example, the osprey—which it is ridiculous to imagine would breed in a midland county—is fully protected, while the beautiful little robin redbreast, dear to all of us, is omitted from the list. As a 'Lover of Nature' truly remarks, a great mistake has been made in issuing a list which had not first been submitted for the correction and approval of some practical ornithologist.

A very interesting paper was read before the Society of Arts last month by Mr Robert H. Jones on 'Asbestos and Asbestic'; with some account of the discovery of the latter at Danville in Lower Canada.* Most persons know what asbestos is, but asbestic is quite a new word coined to name a product somewhat like it, which has only recently been recognised as a valuable thing. The mine at Danville had been given up as a non-paying concern, when it was taken over by a new proprietor, who was struck by the remarkable appearance of the rock in which the asbestos fibre was found, any quantity of which was lying about as waste. After a series of experiments, he erected expensive machinery for pulverising this rock, and the product is found to be suitable for quite a variety of employments. It is described as a fluffy, fibrous material of immaculate whiteness; and there is enough rock to work upon for a hundred years to come. It makes splendid wall plaster, for it needs neither hair nor sand, and this plaster is fireproof, heatproof, and soundproof. Asbestic will also make a fine roofing material which is proof against all climatic influences; and lastly it is a most valuable aid to the paper-maker, and has now taken the lead in the United States of all the various fibres employed in paper-mills. In summing up the discussion which followed the reading of Mr Jones' paper, the chairman, Professor Silvanus Thompson, remarked that the introduction of wood-pulp for paper had degenerated that manufacture to such an extent that a century hence the books now being printed would have disappeared into powder. This new material gave them a paper which was more imperishable than the best linen paper, and probably the next great printer would use it, and print with platinum black, so that both paper and ink would be fireproof.

Mr David Paterson of Roslin, Midlothian, has published in *Nature* the results he has obtained from experiments made regarding the effect of sunlight on the tints of birds' eggs. It is well known that many colouring matters are of the most fugitive kind, and that brilliant light is one of the most potent factors in their destruction. It would seem that the more delicate tints of birds' eggs are of this fugitive kind, some of the finest and most characteristic

tints disappearing on much exposure to sunlight. Blue and greenish blue eggs rapidly change under the influence of light, while little change is noticeable with darker-coloured eggs of olive-brown or chocolate shades. In the experiments referred to various eggs were halved lengthwise, and while one-half was kept in darkness for future comparison, the other half was exposed to direct sunshine in a glass case for periods varying up to one hundred hours. These experiments clearly show that collectors should keep their treasures protected from light or their beauty will quickly fade. Mr Paterson has tested various pigments for comparison with the tints on egg-shells, and has come to the conclusion that of water-colours sixty per cent. are permanent, of coal-tar colours thirty per cent., and of egg-shell colours only twenty per cent. are fast. He might have added, however, that the water-colours and coal-tar colours which are not reliable are perfectly well known to science, and can be judiciously avoided.

It has always been customary to warn children against highly-coloured sweetmeats, although, perhaps, in many cases the colouring matter may be of a harmless character. Dr Blyth, one of the London public analysts, has recently taken the matter up, and has analysed a large number of sweets. He reports that the most brilliantly coloured owe their tints to aniline dyes, and that the tinctorial powers of these agents are so intense that each sweet can contain only a very minute proportion of the dye employed. But as so many articles of food are coloured by these means, he thinks that the daily consumption of aniline colours may easily become sufficient to produce physiological effects. Some of the coal-tar colours are known to be active poisons when taken in comparatively large doses, but what effect comes from constant administration of small quantities is unknown. Dr Blyth thinks that such constant dosing may conduce to indigestion and general nerve disturbance, and believes that the use of such colouring matters should be limited, and in the case of known poisons prohibited altogether.

Both the vice-consul of the Uganda Protectorate, and Bishop Tucker of Uganda, who are in this country, have a wonderful story to tell of hopeful progress; and by the time the railway is completed from Mombasa there is every likelihood of a good market for British products. The railway terminus at Mombasa is a fine stone building, and the train runs at twenty miles an hour on an excellent line for less than a hundred miles into the interior. By the autumn, when he hopes to return, Bishop Tucker believes he will be able to travel one hundred and fifty miles up country by rail, thence for six hundred and eighty miles by a good bullock-wagon road. The steamer on the lake now saves ten days' journey at the other end. At Mengo, the capital, an orderly and civilised government is carried on by the native chiefs, advised by her Majesty's Commissioner. Bicycles are to be seen on the streets; one missionary rode in three weeks from the coast on a pneumatic-tyred cycle. Bricks and tiles are being made for permanent buildings, and wheat is being planted. There are now two steamers on the lake, and another is being sent out. Bishop Tucker says that when he went out

in 1890 there was only one church; now there are four hundred, with an attendance of about thirty thousand, while about one hundred and fifty thousand books have been circulated.

DIVING IN A FLOODED MINE.

'CAN you come up at once, bringing diving outfit? Life-saving work in flooded mine. Wire reply, Thompson, Manager.'

Such was the telegram, received a few minutes previously, which my wife handed me upon coming home from my day's work one evening some five or six years back now.

A diver by trade, I was at that time engaged in repairing the dock-gates at P—, some obstruction or other jammed between them and the lock foundation they travelled over having torn the bottoms sufficiently to make their easy closing rather an uncertain matter. The essential part of this work being done, apart from other considerations, I was able to wire that I would come up first thing in the morning.

Received in reply the telegram, 'Will meet first train at T—, Thompson.'

Although then but thirty-two years of age, I had had thorough practice as a diver, though not in connection with a flooded mine. The dress was my own, and I had no difficulty in obtaining the loan of the other necessities, in the shape of tubing and air-pump—dock property—from the dock-master; the matter being a little facilitated, perhaps, by a telegram he had also received from one of the proprietors of the mine and a heavy shipper, asking him to press forward my departure as quickly and as fully equipped as possible.

Next morning I started by the first and early train, and, soon rising from the open country near the sea-board, we were winding along the hill-sides of the coal country lying immediately behind, the valleys ever getting barer and narrower, and each station dirtier looking than its predecessor. A couple of hours' slow riding and we came to T—, the place I was bound for.

When making for the luggage-van to see to my traps safely put out, I was accosted by a short, thick-set, determined-looking man, dressed in a suit of dusty pilot cloth, who remarked interrogatively, 'Mr Brown, the diver?'

'Yes.'

'I'm Thompson who wired to you yesterday; but we won't wait here. I'll explain matters as we go up to the pit; that's a mile or more away. We'll start off your things first; I have a cart and a couple of men here.'

'Now my lads,' turning to a couple of hearty young fellows, dirtier looking if possible than himself, tailing on at a respectable distance behind, 'get these into the cart as soon as you can for the pit-head.'

In a short time the cart was travelling, and we, that is Thompson and myself in particular, walked behind.

On the way the manager briefly explained the position of affairs, and how it was hoped I should be able to assist.

The mine, though not by any means the largest in the place, was a good-sized one, employing a shift of a hundred and fifty men, and up till now had ever been singularly free from accidents and casualties of any moment. The coal not being

a 'fiery' one, they had had no trouble worth speaking of with gas, and no explosion worthy of the name. It was, however, owing to the strata above the coal, and its position in the valley, a very wet mine, and took a good deal of pumping to keep clear. Three days previously, in the course of ordinary working, they had broken unexpectedly into some extensive disused workings full of water, which, although known of, and given good clearance as they thought, had, from some error apparently, been worked much nearer to than was safe. The water had burst in so suddenly and in such overwhelming force as to carry everything before it, and the men had had the greatest difficulty in escaping, several having had to wade neck-high in places, with the barest margin of space between the surface of the water and the roof, and in total darkness, for all the lights had been washed out. Ten men there were still unaccounted for, and it was hoped that these, or at any rate some of them, had succeeded in reaching a higher level of the workings above that of the water.

Popular imagination is naturally apt to picture the workings of a coal-mine as upon the flat. When it is stated, that although the vein of coal lies, in the main, in a horizontal position, it yet rises and falls frequently in level, oftentimes with breaks or 'faults' more or less sharp in it—the result of past earth disturbances—this will readily be seen to be a mistaken view; for the workings, having to follow the course of the vein, have also to rise and fall in workable inclines, long and short, where necessary. So whilst the lower portion of the mine was still, spite of the pumping, full of water, extensive inner reaches would be clear, and it was to these it was hoped I should be able to penetrate, and establish communication with men supposed to have taken refuge there, and still living.

Workmen were busily engaged fitting up a powerful pump to supplement those already in use day and night, and the level of the water was being steadily lowered, but too slowly to leave much hope of reaching the men alive at the best rate of reduction.

By this time we had arrived at the colliery, and I was taken straight to the office for a consultation with the managing director and two or three managers of neighbouring collieries, who, after the estimable fashion prevailing in the district, were, some of them, in constant attendance to suggest, supervise, and give in general the benefit of their long and varied experience.

After a close examination of plans, thoroughly and minutely explained to me, I told them that I was prepared to try. The cart waiting outside was directed to the shaft mouth, where we followed, selecting on the way four steady and tried men, well known to the officials, to act as air pumpers.

The shaft itself was clear, as well as the way leading from it, for three hundred yards or so, the water commencing at a dip at that point. The pump in its case was first sent down in charge of two of the chosen helpers, and then my dress, with a hundred and fifty yards of tubing, carefully wound on its reel, in charge of the other two. Lastly I was directed to take my place in the middle of the cage, four companions, as being accustomed to the descent, hedging me in, two at each open end.

I had never been down a mine before—indeed had never seen one nearer than from the window of a railway carriage—and the ease and rapidity of our descent of two hundred yards was quite a revelation to me. My feelings, I remember, were not the most agreeable either, as I saw the earth shoot up past me, and felt my legs weakly tending to give way, as the soles of my boots apparently passed up into my body.

A slight bump at touching the bottom, and out we stepped into not such absolute darkness as I had anticipated, for, even were it a fiery pit, so near the downcast shaft (through which the air is drawn for ventilation), there would be no danger of gas and explosion. Three or four large lamps, with unprotected lights (comets, if I remember rightly, I heard them called) threw a yellow glare over the place. A couple of trams, standing by, with a horse attached, were loaded with the apparatus, and after a short wait to enable my eyes to accommodate themselves to the absence of daylight, the word being given to go ahead, away we went, the trams first, ourselves closely behind. Very novel and rather awe-inspiring it was to me; the strange black surroundings, the darkness, made more palpable by the flickering flashes of light thrown at our feet, or a little forward, by the lamps we carried; the occasional harshly echoing uncouth cry of the driver to his horse, and, above all, the thought of the errand we were on, and the risks I had determined to take.

The careful arching of the first part of the mainway was succeeded almost immediately by a narrowing road with timber-supported sides and roof; and after proceeding some little distance, we turned into a still narrower passage, a short length along which brought us to the edge of the water.

Here half-a-dozen men were busily engaged in arranging the extension of pipes necessary for keeping the pumping at full stretch. The trams were soon unloaded, taken back out of the way, and I got into my dress, with the exception of helmet and weights. The air pump being fixed up ready for use, I set a couple of men to work at it, instructing them as to the best way of keeping up a steady supply of air, and carefully watching them at the work for five minutes. Everything going on smoothly and well, my helmet was fastened on by one of the managers, and the weights adjusted over my shoulders—these, and heavy leaden-soled boots, being necessary for walking along and moving about in water, where the question of balance and the disposal of one's gravity is a very important matter to a diver, with a good deal of air enclosed about him by his waterproof dress.

All being ready, a loop of the signal cord fastened round my waist, specially tended by Mr Thompson, who had also exclusive charge of the reel of piping to be wound in and unwound according to an agreed upon number of pulls upon the cord, I entered the water, and was soon overhead. The task I had to accomplish was a highly dangerous one, namely, to travel fifty yards along the dip and a portion of the level at the bottom, at a point there to open a pair of ventilating doors, and proceed a little more than the same distance along the fresh and rising passage, when I would be out of the water. If successful, it was hoped I would here meet the imprisoned men at the nearest point.

I have often since wondered, could I have carried out this plan, what the men would have thought of my appearance. None of them had probably ever seen a diver equipped for work; and their minds were naturally given to superstition from the solitary, dark, and hazardous nature of their occupation. Further weakened by want of food for three days, and hemmed in by the water, what, after this deadly isolation, would they have thought when their languishing attention was suddenly attracted by hearing, in the profound stillness, the slight stir in the water, and when by the dim light of a shred of candle, they saw emerge my unearthly looking helmet with its barred goggle eyes, and train of attached tubing? Worse still, what would a possibly single survivor have thought and felt? An imprisoned prehistoric monster, dimly conceived of, trapped unexpectedly ages ago, and held captive until now, in a hollow of the coal measures—a kind of amplified, horror striking toad in stone? Hardly so far-fetched perhaps, but without doubt little less terrible, and sufficient to drive ordinary mortals under such conditions to madness.

This trial was not however fated to be theirs, for the difficulties I found to be insurmountable. After proceeding a few yards carefully and slowly, feeling my way onwards by the side-wall, I discovered that I had difficulties to contend with which I had not anticipated. The original rush of water had been so great as to cut up the flooring very much, and I had to feel cautiously with each foot before resting my weight upon it, lest I should stumble by dropping suddenly into a hole or rut; also an occasional big prop, broken loose, came surging round and against me with the motion I gave the water.

This latter I did not so much mind as far as injury to myself was concerned, but gave many an anxious thought to the lengthening trail of pipe behind that connected me with life; for, this broken or twisted, and I was done for. The water too, long hidden from warmth of sunlight, was cruelly cold and numbing.

But the less one thinks of dangers whilst exposed to them the better, so forward I resolutely made my way, steadily pulling at the air pipe, and keeping as accurate a tally as possible of the distance from the starting point, so as to know where to look, or feel rather (for light was out of the question in such water) for the door. At length I came to the turn, and gingerly turning it, immediately after to the first of the doors. I had been fully instructed as to how they should open, and, in the event of their being blocked, had brought a short iron bar tied to my belt to try and lift them off the hinges.

After a short rest I set to work. First I felt the door as well as I could all over, and dismally did my spirits sink as I realised the magnitude of the task before me, in my inmost heart indeed, the impossibility of accomplishing it; for not only was there an awkward and firmly fixed jam of timbers, big and small, against one side, but in addition an accumulation against it to quite half its height, of coal-dust, stones, clay, and rubbish generally.

I did my best for half an hour to clear things, but to little purpose. It would have meant hard work to a man in the eye of day to have cleared away all the raffle there was there; a sheer impossibility to one working under my peculiar

difficulties. But I did not give it up until a steady and strong pull backward upon my head—the result probably of a heavy piece of prop bearing against the pipe—convinced me that I dared not go beyond certain constrained movements with safety. Before giving it up I made one final effort to raise the door at the hinge side by scraping the dirt away as well as I could in a narrow cut, placing the biggest stone I could find, by feeling, at the bottom of it, and using my bar lever-wise upon it and against a cross-piece running along the lower part of the door. All to no purpose; it did not yield an inch, and I had reluctantly to signal that I was returning.

I went back as cautiously and slowly as I had gone, and was soon out of the water, helmet off, while the eager listeners crowded round as I gave my account. Very disappointed they were at the result, though Mr Thompson warmly shook me by the hand, after I had gone through the difficulties in detail.

The number of those present had been increased by a new arrival, a fine young fellow, the son of one of the managers present. Although but twenty-two, he was himself a qualified manager, acting as yet as an assistant to his father. He, naturally enough, was the one most up to date, from a theoretical and scientific point of view, of those present, and it was his keen interest in the diving that had brought him to the spot, as soon as his duties at a neighbouring mine would allow. He, fortunately, knew of the Fleuss apparatus, and that it had been successfully made use of in a pit seven or eight miles off, a couple of months back. I agreed to try it, if it was procured.

A word as to the Fleuss dress. It is very similar to the ordinary diving dress, except in there being no need for pumping air through a tube for the use of the diver. Instead, the user fixes over the mouth, inside the helmet, a special kind of respirator, through which he breathes. By a peculiar arrangement of tubes and valves, the exhaled breath is led through a box containing caustic soda, which transforms the poisonous element, carbonic acid gas, which the air has gained in its brief sojourn in the lungs, into innocent carbonate of soda, and admits of the residual portion of expired air being breathed over again. A certain amount of the vital principle in air, oxygen, being used up in each inhalation, provision is made for its necessary replenishment, by its storage under pressure in the outer casing of the metal helmet—the whole being under the direct and easy control of the one using it.

The great advantage of this dress and apparatus lies in the absence of the long air tube, the diver being thus freed from his greatest source of anxiety and danger, and his movements in consequence being more free, decisive, and effective. I had worked upon two or three occasions, where it was impossible to use the ordinary diving apparatus, in a Fleuss suit; but though it had answered very well, possibly from not being so accustomed to it as to my usual dress and gear, I did not care so much for it.

After a brief consultation with his father and the others, he left for the purpose of making inquiries; and as nothing was to be gained by

staying where we were, in the meantime we packed up my things roughly, put them upon one side, and walking back to the shaft bottom, took our places in the cage, and returned to the surface.

The account of our efforts and failure was received with the keenest eagerness, and greatest disappointment, by the interested mass of people around.

As we would have to wait two or three hours for news, some cold eatables were sent for, and duly disposed of.

Over subsequent pipes, a running conversation was maintained upon the possibility of finding some of the men alive, and the various schemes of rescue that had been suggested, thought carefully over, but reluctantly dismissed as impracticable; all tending to the general belief and conclusion that if the new help were not soon obtainable, the little existing hope would have to be given up.

In a couple of hours' time we heard a trap drive quickly up, and stop at the door. 'That's Tom,' said his father, and we all hurried into the long, outer clerk's room, to be there met by young Davidson to tell us of his success.

The outfit he had brought with him, and I immediately overhauled it, and proceeded to give its efficiency the most thorough of tests, by getting rigged up, and remaining in it, sitting down and moving about, for a quarter of an hour. Satisfied that it was all right, I signified that I was ready to try again. Away we went in a body, and were soon a second time underground at the water's edge.

Now that I could take a longer journey, having no air pipe to trouble about and drag after me, we had decided that I was to try another route, very much longer than the former one, and with still a pair of doors to go through, but which doors it was argued, from their different position, would be more free, if not altogether so, from obstructions to their opening. Accordingly, when having got to the point I had reached at the first trial, instead of turning off, I kept on for a hundred and twenty yards farther, to get to the other door I was seeking. It was not by any means as free as I had hoped to find it, there being a considerable heap of rubbish against this also; still, compared with the first, it might be called favourable. A quarter of an hour's hard work, and I found that I could start one end; a little more clearing, and it grudgingly yielded to the whole of my strength a full half, when, fishing for a suitable piece of wood, I securely propped it in that position, and went for the second, half-a-dozen yards farther on. This having been protected in a great measure by number one, I opened with but very little trouble, and passed through. A terrible fright I got, by the way, between these doors, for in feeling my way along the side of the chamber, as it were, formed by them, my hand came into soft but sudden contact with a face and beard. I had been told that I might come across bodies, but had paid no particular attention to the statement when made, and had since been so engrossed with the work that I had forgotten all about it. It was the suddenness, the unexpectedness of the thing that startled me I think more than anything else, for I had handled bodies in water many times; but then I was prepared, and on the lookout, which made a very great difference. Anyhow I very

rapidly drew away my hand, and with a heart-stopping flush of fear, had to lean against the wall—the opposite one it was too—to regain my self-possession and courage. In two or three minutes I was all right, and, walking gently to the same spot, after a little fumbling, caught hold of the dead man's arm, brought the body down to the ground, and fixed a prop over it to keep it in position, having no fancy for such a ghastly attendant as a dead body plunging after me with the motion I gave the water as I went along. The poor fellow, hurrying to escape, had probably found his way alive to the spot, and failing to open the second door, had been drowned by the rising water. I had still some distance to go on a rising gradient, and this I successfully accomplished, coming ultimately out of the water in an inner and convenient portion of the workings.

I could see no one as yet, even were there anyone near, as I had no light. I had, however, a small bull's-eye lantern inside the waterproof dress, which, taking out, I lighted.

The seam of coal, as I have already remarked, being exceptionally free from gas, was worked by naked lights, so there was no need of a Davy lamp, nor fear of striking a match, and carrying an unprotected light. The air, I had been told, would probably be all right. The clear burning of match and lamp proved this, and I had no hesitation in divesting myself of my helmet.

A long ball of thin strong twine I had also carried with me, unwinding it as I went along, for signalling purposes, and as a guide to my own safe return from the devious exploring portion still ahead. I gave the pulls agreed upon in the event of success up to this point, and felt, I must admit, considerable pleasure at feeling the return pulls of acknowledgment. With the brilliant light of the lamp to help, I made confident and rapid headway in the agreed upon thorough visit I was to pay to every part. Of this I had done about a half, carefully consulting a rough plan now and again, without having seen a sign of life, barring a couple of mice, who as the light touched them rushed skurrying into a hole, when I was suddenly brought up by a hoarse hysterical shout and call close by. I could not make out what was said, if an intelligible anything was said, but this mattered little, for the next moment four men rushed up, and overwhelmed me with exclamations and expressions of unbounded joy. They shook my hand again and again, asked incoherent questions, and—well, I cannot describe their joy, it was so emotionally expressed and so extreme. I felt very sorry for them, especially so for one poor fellow, who found a relief for his overcharged feelings in quietly crying, leaning his head upon his bent arm against the side. When they had after a while gained some control over themselves, I told them how I had come, and of the efforts that were being made for their release; whilst they in turn gave me a broken account of how they had been caught by the water, and how they had spent the time of their imprisonment chiefly in walking from one part of their prison to another, in discussing the chances of rescue, and in fitful snatches of sleep. Hunger they had not suffered the keenest pangs of, as, luckily, the inrush of water had taken place in the morning, when food boxes had been untouched; but the contents of three of these,

subsequently found, though husbanded as closely as possible, had by this nearly come to an end. The hope of rescue, too, at first strong and sustaining, had been gradually disappearing, and they were lying down together in the lowest dependency when the welcome flash of my lamp round a bend gave them the assurance that what they had most dreaded, the having been given up for dead, had not befallen them. In the way of light they had nothing beyond a carefully saved couple of inches of candle, saved for—they hardly knew what, unless 'to see each other die,' one of them told me later.

I had hoped to see more of them, for there were still five missing, but as they knew there were no more in the place, having several times gone thoroughly through it, we went back together to the point at which I had left the water.

They were very loth to let me leave, but there was nothing else for it. I promised to return with food as soon as possible, and left them the light, very much to their comfort. The signal cord was also tied to a side post, with which they were still more pleased, as it seemed to connect them more tangibly with life and friends in giving the means of rough communication with them.

Putting on the helmet again, I started upon my return journey. When I came to the doors, I determined, though it cost me an effort, to take the dead body along with me; and this with a good deal of hard work, though now accustomed in a degree to the style of travelling, I succeeded in doing.

A strange sight I must have been, with my gruesome burden, half dragged, half carried, to those expecting me, several of whom came in up to the waist to my assistance.

Their satisfaction at learning my report, that I had found four men alive was very great; and the getting together of a supply of food was at once energetically proceeded with. I was myself by this time very much done up, but with the rest during the time in which things were being got ready, and after drinking two or three cupsful of hot milk and coffee, braced with a little spirit, I felt fully equal to another journey.

A tin, half as big as a bolster, had been hastily made in the lamp station above, and filled with the most nourishing food obtainable at such short notice. With this securely strapped upon my back, and the end of a thin, but tough and strong, line secured around my waist, I again successfully made my journey.

The tin box was soon broken open, and its contents, in part, joyfully and thankfully gone into; not, however, before the oldest of them, a man of fifty or thereabouts, had shortly, but with emphasis, by way of grace, said: 'Thank God for his kindness, lads.' I stayed with them for an hour or more, then left, after showing the use of the line I had brought with me, as a means of communication; for by pulling carefully and slowly at it, several small tins, tied on at intervals, could, with a little difficulty and jerkiness, be hauled along to them, and the line, pulled back by their friends and rescuers, be again used for the same purpose.

Four days more it took, with pumping pushed to the utmost, to reduce the water sufficiently to enable them to be released; and I made a shorten-

ing journey each day to them, mainly to cheer them up, and once to restore communication with a fresh rope, the first one having got broken through chafing. At the end of that time they walked out, rather weak and shaken, but otherwise apparently but little the worse for their long and trying imprisonment. The missing bodies were found as the water subsided.

A very handsome cheque from the proprietors, a hearty hand-shake all round, and I was again on the station platform waiting to be taken home. What touched me as much as anything was a little incident that there took place. Just as the train was steaming in, a pleasant-faced, motherly woman came up, leading a child of three or four by the hand. She said something to Mr Thompson, who had come down to see me off, and he, turning to me, said: 'Here's the wife of one of the imprisoned men wishing to thank you.' The way she did it was to lift up the child to kiss me, and burst into tears herself. I certainly was touched—I had a little girl of much the same age waiting to kiss me as soon as I got home—and also proud of the part I had played, and its successful termination.

THE DAY BEYOND.

WHEN youth is with us, all things seem
But lightly to be wished and won;
We snare to-morrow in a dream
And take our toll for work undone:
'For life is long, and time a stream
That sleeps and sparkles in the sun—
What need of any haste?' we say;
'To-morrow's longer than to-day.'

And when to-morrow shall destroy
The heaven of our dreams, in vain
Our hurrying manhood we employ
To build the vanished bliss again;
We have no leisure to enjoy.
'So few the years that yet remain;
So much to do, and, ah!' we say,
'To-morrow's shorter than to-day.'

But when our hands are worn and weak,
And still our labours seem unblest,
And time goes past us like a bleak
Last twilight waning to the west,
'It is not here—the bliss we seek;
Too brief is life for happy rest.
And yet what need of grief?' we say;
'To-morrow's longer than to-day.'

A. ST JOHN ADCOCK.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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